

Turkish Airlines' domestic flight hijacked

ANKARA (AFP) — A Turkish Airlines flight carrying 76 passengers from Ankara to Istanbul was hijacked Monday evening and ordered to fly to the Black Sea city of Trabzon, the Anatolia news agency reported. The plane had taken off from Ankara at 1706 GMT, and the captain radioed the control tower 31 minutes later saying the plane had been hijacked by two armed men. It was not immediately known how many crew the flight carried. This was the third hijacking of a Turkish airliner this year. The other two were defused without violence.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية. الراي.

Egyptian aid team arrives in Sudan

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Egyptian Health Minister Ismail Sallam arrived in Khartoum on Monday at the head of a humanitarian delegation to aid victims of Sudan's worst flooding in 20 years, officials said. The 20-member team including 14 doctors and Sallam, himself a surgeon, will stay a week in areas in the south and north of the country hit hardest by the flooding, the officials said. Their humanitarian aid consists mainly of food and medicine. On Saturday, an Egyptian plane bearing 30 tonnes of tents and jute arrived in Khartoum.

Volume 23 Number 6943

AMMAN TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1998, JUMADA I 24, 1419

Price: Jordan 200 fils

Taleban calls for talks, Iran warns of regional war

Agencies

THE LEADER of Afghanistan's Taleban movement called on Iran on Monday to hold talks under U.N. laws to defuse border tension caused by the killing of Iranian diplomats and Taleban takeover of a Shiite stronghold.

Mullah Mohammad Omar told the independent Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) news agency that the United Nations would blame Iran if it failed to accept his offer.

He was apparently reacting to warnings from the Iranian leadership of the danger of a major regional conflict after the Taleban's Sunni Islamist militia captured Bamian on the weekend.

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei warned Monday of a "huge threat" of war in the region over Afghanistan, but said he was doing his best to prevent it.

"So far I have prevented the raging of a fire in the region, which is not easily extinguishable. But all should know that the threat is very huge and widespread, and very near," Khamenei warned in a message broadcast on state radio and television.

He said war could only be averted by "forcing the Pakistani army to stop interfering in Afghanistan and by forcing the Taleban leaders to abide by logic and reason and stop their catastrophic acts and compensate for past errors."

The Iranian army said Monday it was prepared to carry out "any mission" against the Taleban Islamic militia following Khamenei's warning.

"The army is relying on God

and, making use of all its resources, is fully prepared to execute the orders of the leader of the Islamic revolution and carry out any mission anywhere and under any circumstances," it said.

Iran has accused Pakistan, a close ally of the Taleban, of playing an active role in the Sunni Muslim militia's spectacular triumph against other Afghan factions and spread of its control over almost all of the war-torn country.

Khamenei, who is also the commander-in-chief of Iran's armed forces, charged that Pakistan army jets participated in the "massacre" of the Shiite population in Bamian, central Afghanistan, which fell to the Taleban militia on Sunday.

"The crimes committed by this heartless and oppressive tribe in central Afghanistan and against the Hazara [Shiite] community in Bamian are far more abhorrent" than the massacre of civilians in Mazar-i-Sharif, a city in northern Afghanistan which fell to the militia on August 8, he charged.

Taleban forces captured Bamian on Sunday and Khamenei accused Taleban leaders of "condemning to

death every male in Bamian older than seven."

"Why commit such blood-thirsty and savage acts? Their only offence is not to submit to a plot by American oil and gas companies in collusion with some Pakistani military officials — a plot which has found expression in the Taleban mischief," he said.

The Iranian leader was apparently referring to reported negotiations between the Taleban and the U.S. company UNOCAL to build a two-billion-dollar pipeline carrying central Asian gas through Afghanistan to Pakistan.

Iranian officials believe the Taleban was created by Pakistan and the United States to mainly allow energy-rich Central Asia a new access to the sea through Afghanistan and Pakistan, bypassing Iran.

The Iranian leader urged the Shiites in Bamian to resist the "dogmatic and savage" Taleban, "which is alien from the shining teachings of Islam."

"With a bleeding heart and tearful eyes I am carefully following the bitter events and feel your sufferings in the depth of my heart," he said. "Resort to God and bravely withstand the beasts. God will

ing you will triumph."

Khamenei said Iranians were "impatiently" waiting for their government to take a decision on how to deal with the Taleban after the murder of Iranian diplomats by the Islamic militia.

"The Iranian nation is in pain over the insecurity caused at our eastern border and the unjust spilling of the blood of our diplomats," he said.

"With a heart filled with pain and sorrow, I am impatiently waiting for our statesmen to make a decision against this heartless and savage tribe," the Iranian leader said, referring to the Taleban.

Iran's National Security Council, the top political and military decision-making body, held a meeting on Afghanistan on Saturday, and Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi said "important decisions" were taken.

The Taleban acknowledged last week that "renegade" militiamen had killed nine Iranian diplomats after a raid on Iran's consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif on August 8. Iran said subsequently that a journalist of the official Iranian news agency IRNA had also been killed.

Iran has vowed to take

revenge for the murder of its nationals and announced plans to stage huge military exercises on its border with Afghanistan.

The Iranian army has stationed more than 60,000 troops along the border with Afghanistan in addition to tens of thousands of elite Revolutionary Guards and the army has also announced plans to stage manoeuvres in the region starting September 23 involving 200,000 troops.

Khamenei pleaded with the Muslim World to act to save the Shiites and "other oppressed people" of Afghanistan.

"Don't allow millions of people in Afghanistan to be victims of Taleban mischief. Don't allow this rigid-minded and heartless group to wage a religious war and spill blood which could, God forbid, spread to other parts of the Islamic World," he said.

The Iranian leader notably urged the people of Pakistan to stop "that part of the Pakistani army which in the service of American oil companies pours fire and bombs on the heads of the people of Bamian."

"Don't allow this section of the Pakistani army which sows seeds of unrest in the region to continue waging war. Don't allow the American oil companies to pursue their wicked interests at the cost of the bloods of tens of thousands of Muslims," he warned.

The Taleban authorities Monday gave assurances that the ethnic residents of Bamian would be protected and the militia-controlled Radio Shariat said strict orders had gone out that opposition prisoners should not be killed.



Water Minister Hani Mulki raises a flask full of water for all reporters to see, Monday, during a tour at the Zai Water Treatment Plant (Photo by Nasser Ayyoub)

Zai station pumps at full capacity Saturday

By Ahmad Khatib

AMMAN — The Zai Water Treatment Plant that supplies Amman will resume full-capacity pumping as of Saturday, the government said Monday.

Minister of Water and Energy Hani Mulki said the plant will resume pumping after all necessary repairs were carried out. He added that Western Amman will resume receiving water twice a week instead of once a week since the water crisis erupted in July.

"I assure citizens that the water crisis will not occur again," Mulki told the press during a seven-hour tour of the lower Yarmouk basin region, and visits to laboratories and control rooms along the King Abdullah Canal, the Zai plant and Dabouq Reservoir.

"Within the next few days, additional improvements will be added to the plant to ensure it will provide supplies twice a week to Western Amman."

Among the new measures to ensure proper supplies of water, the minister said the Royal Scientific Society conducts biological and chemical tests on water coming in and going out of the plant three times a week. The RSS tests are compared then matched with the Ministry of Water's own tests before the water reaches Dabouq Reservoir.

He said in the past few weeks, the plant was forced to stop or slow down its supplies in order to maintain water quality. "It is better to stop pumping than supplying water that does not fit human consumption. Quality is more important than quantity," Mulki said.

Last week, Japan granted Jordan \$63 million to fund the second stage of expanding the plant to double water supplies to the Greater Amman area.

Mulki said some citizens are using extra water after the government exempted Western Amman residents from paying water bills for the months of July through September.

He said because of excessive use of waters some people complain that water does not reach them. "I urge all citizens to act responsibly in their use of this scarce natural resource," Mulki said.

He explained that the huge amounts of phosphate, coming from fertilisers and other sources around King Abdullah Canal, coupled with the heat wave, contributed to the growth of algae in the canal.

To protect the canal water, high fences have been built on both sides of the canal to protect it against any source of pollution.

To help find a permanent solution to Amman shortage, Mulki said the government will next month call for tenders for the Dist-Amman water project which "also aims at reviving Jordan southern regions."

The minister added that he will visit Iraq to discuss the possibility of drawing water from the Tigris River to supply water to the northern parts of the country.

Last Tuesday Ministry of Water and Irrigation Secretary General Qusai Quteishat asked Jordanian businesspersons to invest in water projects worth JD3.5 billion (\$5 billion) over the next 14 years in order to meet the rising demand for this scarce natural resource.

ICRC-Iranian delegation to repatriate bodies of killed diplomats

TEHRAN (AFP) — International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) representatives and Iranian officials left here for Afghanistan on Monday to repatriate the bodies of Iranian diplomats and a journalist killed by the Taleban, the official IRNA news agency reported.

The bodies are to be formally identified before being brought back to Iran, the Iranian news agency said.

The Taleban on Saturday gave permission for an Iranian plane to land in the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif to bring home the bodies of the nine murdered diplomats and that of an IRNA correspondent also killed by the Taleban.

The Taleban has blamed "renegade" elements for the massacre of the Iranian diplomats following the capture of Mazar-e-Sharif from anti-Taleban forces on August 8.

Five days on, U.S. envoy achieves no breakthrough

TEL AVIV (AP) — American peace envoy Dennis Ross has so far achieved no break in the deadlock between Israel and the Palestinians over a long-delayed Israeli pullback in the West Bank, an Israeli official said Monday.

Ross held a fourth meeting Monday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Public Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani, and briefed them on his latest meetings with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

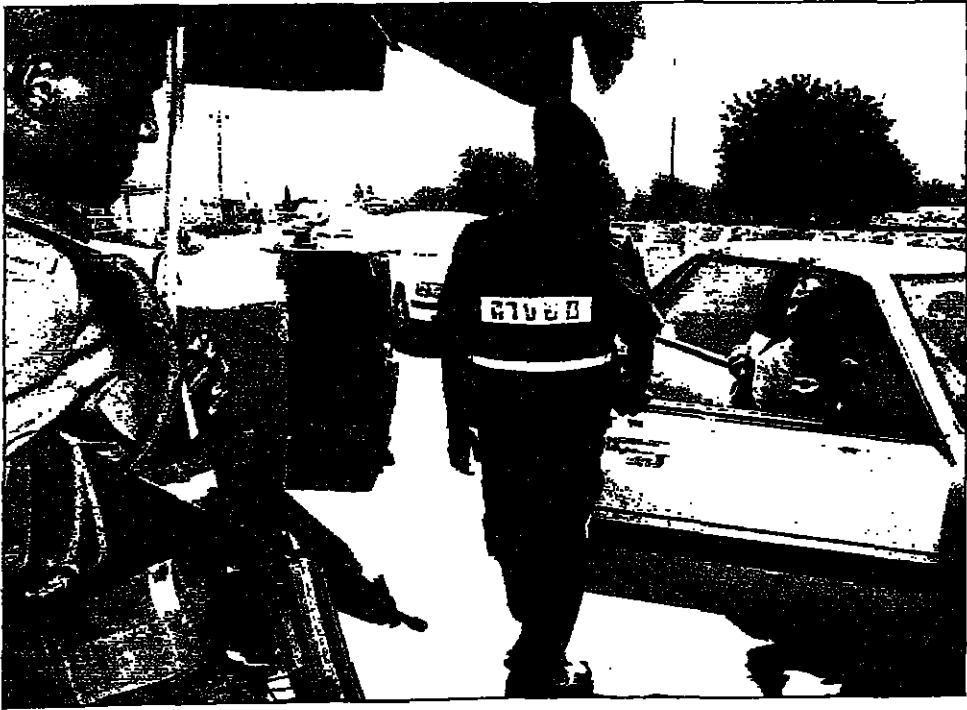
The meeting came as Israel slightly eased the blockade it imposed early Friday on Palestinians of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip after an elite Israeli police unit killed two leaders of the Islamic Hamas group.

Israel lifted a so-called internal closure around one West Bank city, Nablus, permitting travel to resume between it and the rest of the West Bank. It also reopened the border to Palestinian trucks bringing in goods, although they were subject to heavy security checks.

But tens of thousands of Palestinian workers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip remained barred from jobs in Israel.

From Ross' account it emerged that Arafat is not willing to satisfy Israel's demands regarding a clampdown on Islamists opposed to peace with Israel, Netanyahu's adviser David Bar-Ilan said.

"They are refusing to even discuss the issues of reciprocity and their commit-



A Palestinian man shows his papers to an Israeli border police officer trying to get through an army checkpoint on the Jerusalem-Bethlehem road Monday. For the first time in more than a year, Israel has sealed off the West Bank and Gaza Strip, locking out tens of thousands of Palestinians from their workplaces (AP photo)

ments under the January 1997 agreements on security," Bar-Ilan told the Associated Press.

Israel has agreed to withdraw from 13 per cent of the West Bank but insists that the Palestinians imprison those it considers activists, confiscate arms from Islamists and fulfil other security accords.

The Palestinians say they are willing to honour a security memorandum drawn up several months ago by Israeli and Palestinian security forces under U.S. auspices, but Netanyahu rejected it as too favourable to the Palestinians.

The Palestinians are also demanding that Israel honour its commitments to let the Palestinians open a sea-port and airport in the Gaza Strip, and a so-called safe passage — a land route — for Palestinians across Israeli territory between Gaza and the West Bank.

Israel has so far refused for reasons of security. An Israeli official said Monday the Palestinians have backed away from understandings that were reached on these issues.

An Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity, accused Arafat

of deliberately subverting a meeting now so he will have a greater opportunity to attack Israel at the upcoming meeting of the U.N. General Assembly.

Israel sealed off the West Bank and the Gaza Strip after its agents killed two brothers Imad and Adel Awadallah who were prominent members of Hamas, citing fear of retaliation by the group's military wing.

Hamas spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmad Yassin said the group would take revenge. Hamas has killed scores of civilians in suicide bombing attacks in Israeli cities.

Israel threatens sanctions if Palestinians declare state

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Palestinians will not be allowed to come to Israel to work if they declare an independent state next May, Israel's ambassador to the United States, Zalmay Shoval, has warned.

Military radio said Shoval made the threat during a meeting in Washington with World Bank President James Wolfensohn. He was the first Israeli official to threaten reprisals for an independence declaration, it said.

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat has said on several occasions that he plans to proclaim an independent state May 4, 1999, the end of the five-year interim autonomy period under the Israeli-Palestinian Oslo accords.

So far, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said only that Israel would take "unilateral measures" if Arafat takes unilateral steps, with the expectation that Israel could annex parts of the West Bank.

About 100,000 Palestinians go to Israel every day to work, two thirds of them legally.

But Israel sealed off the West Bank and Gaza last week for fear of reprisals following the killings of two Hamas military chiefs Thursday. The closure has increased unemployment in the West Bank and Gaza for an undetermined period.

IAEA says unable to carry out verification mission in Iraq

VIENNA (AFP) — The director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mohamed Al Baradei, said Monday that the agency was unable to carry out its mission to inspect Iraq's nuclear programme.

Since Aug. 5, Iraq has forbidden the United Nations' Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the IAEA to inspect new sites while allowing the surveillance of already declared industrial and military sites.

On Wednesday, the U.N. Security Council suspended any review of the sanctions until Iraq agrees to cooperate with the two agencies responsible for its disarmament.

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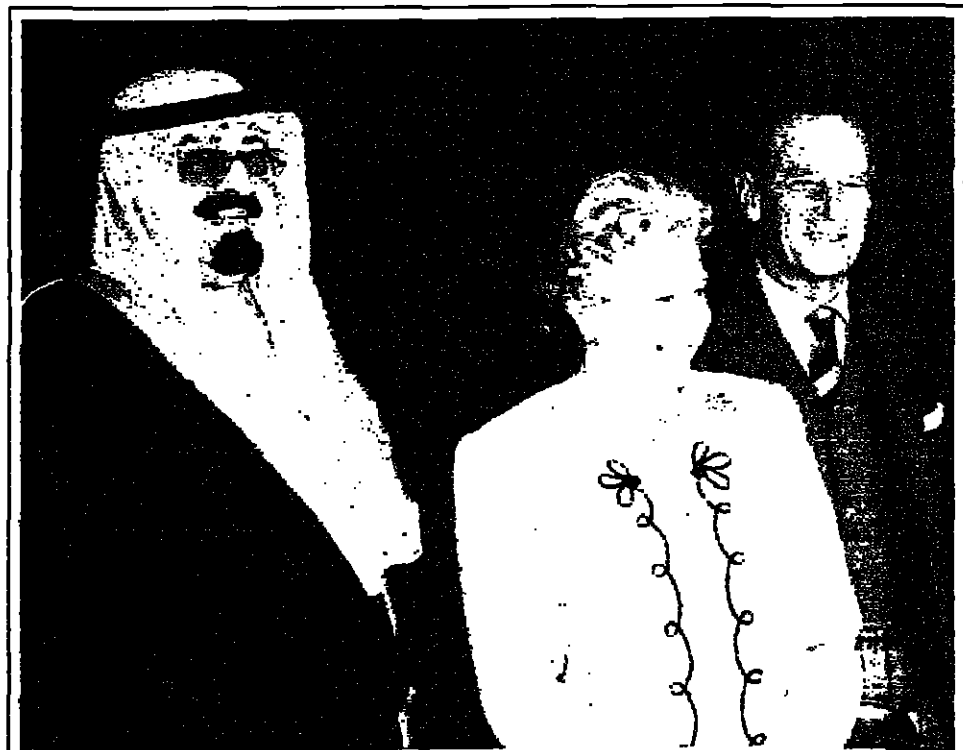
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IN WEST FOR FIRST TIME IN 10 YEARS: Britain's Queen Elizabeth II and Duke of Edinburgh with the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, Prince Abdullah Ben Abdul Aziz Al Saud, after he arrived at her Scottish residence, Balmoral Castle, for lunch on Monday. The prince arrived in London on Sunday for his first visit to the West in 10 years and was welcomed by Britain's Prince Charles (AP photo)

New test of Israeli anti-missile missile soon with 'virtual' target

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel's Arrow-2 anti-missile, which failed its last test firing, will soon undergo a new test with a "virtual" target, an Arrow project source said.

In the two previous tests there was a real target missile. This time the target will be "virtual" or simulated, the source told The Associated Press.

At the last test of the Arrow-2, in August 1997, the missile veered off course and the test was aborted, the Israeli Defence Ministry said.

Nevertheless, Defence Secretary William Cohen this year approved funding for Israel to deploy a third battery of the Arrow-2.

Two-thirds of the estimated \$1.6 billion cost of the Arrow project is being financed by the United States. Washington has so far contributed about \$250 million to the programme.

The system was originally supposed to become operational in 1998, but a senior Israeli air force officer, Brig. Gen. Zion Sapir, told reporters last month

that the first battery would probably be deployed in 1999.

The Arrow-2 is being developed by Israel Aircraft Industries.

The upcoming test will be the sixth. The missile will be launched from a ship in the Mediterranean, said the source, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

This will be the first time that the missile's early warning, tracking and fire control systems will be used for detecting and intercepting the target, he said.

At the last two launchings they were tested in "shadow mode," which means they functioned in parallel, but did not play a role in the launch and interception.

The ship will be far out to sea so that the launch cannot be filmed or photographed by the news media from the shore. The warhead will not be activated and the missile will be destroyed from the ground about 100 km from its launcher.

The Arrow-2 is intended by Israel as a defence

against ballistic missiles possessed by Iraq, Iran or other potential enemies such as Syria or Libya, and can also be integrated into American missile defence systems.

During the 1991 Gulf war, Soviet-manufactured Scud missiles fired by Iraq caused extensive damage in Israeli cities.

Casualties were relatively low because the missiles had conventional, not nuclear, chemical or biological warheads.

Patriot missiles supplied to Israel during the war by the United States proved ineffective against the Scuds.

Last month Iran successfully tested the Shahab-3 medium range missile which is capable of reaching Israel. Iran is widely believed to be striving to achieve a nuclear capability.

In Israel and abroad the Arrow project has been challenged, both on account of its cost and because critics say it will be ineffective against ballistic missiles with multiple warheads.

decoys or other readily available devices for making interception more difficult.

The critics advocate either deterrence by means of a second-strike capability provided by nuclear missiles mounted on submarines, or interception of enemy ballistic missiles immediately after they are launched. The second alternative would require anti-ballistic missiles fired from pilotless planes above the enemy's territory.

Defenders of the Arrow project say it does not rule out the alternative solutions and they too are being studied.

According to foreign press reports, the new Dolphin-class submarines which Israel is to receive from Germany are capable of launching cruise missiles.

The submarines are currently undergoing sea trials in the North Sea. Israel is not known to possess a cruise missile but is believed to have the technical know-how to produce one.



WELCOME TO THE HOTEL... CLINTON? Israelis walk past the entrance to the Carmel Hotel in the coastal town of Netanya, 20 miles north of Tel Aviv, Monday. The hotel temporarily named itself the "Carmel Clinton" hotel in a show of solidarity with U.S. President Bill Clinton. The Carmel Clinton hotel manager said that the name change was intended to help the president by sending him a wave of positive energy (AP photo)

Israeli cabinet approves 1999 budget

TEL AVIV (AP) — After days of wrangling, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu persuaded his cabinet to approve a budget cuts program that reduces spending overall but raises defence outlays for the first time in ten years.

Fourteen ministers voted in favour of the proposal, two were against and one did not vote.

The review of the proposed cut began last week, and as many as 11 of 17 ministers were reported to have opposed the programme at the time.

Netanyahu and Finance Minister Yankov Neeman met with budget opponents over the past week and managed to piece together a larger-than-expected majority for the plan. Neeman and Netanyahu said at a news conference after the vote that the majority was attained by redistributing budget cuts among the various ministries, and that overall spending won't be higher than planned.

However, the defence budget will be increased in the coming year. Netanyahu has been insisting on raising it in 1999 for the first time in 10 years, citing new threats to Israel's security, including Iran's Shahab-3 missile.

On Sunday, he said defence spending wouldn't rise as much as he would like, but that the government had agreed on a 10-year plan meant to increase defence spending incrementally.

The 1999 defence budget is 33.3 billion shekels (\$8.6 billion), an increase of 670 million shekels (\$174 million) over the 1998 budget.

Israel calls on Russia to halt technology transfer

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called on Russia's new Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov on Sunday to help stop the transfer of arms technology in the region.

Israel and the United States have repeatedly urged Russia to withhold the sale of rockets, nuclear technology and technical assistance to Iran.

"I hope that you will use your influence to stem the flow of dual-use technologies, equipment and know-how, which will further destabilise the region in general and pose an existential threat to Israel, if left unchecked," Netanyahu wrote in a congratulatory note to Primakov.

In July Iran test-fired a missile with a range of 1,300 kilometres. The Shahab-3 could strike Israel, Saudi Arabia and portions of Russia, as well as Turkey.

An Israeli military source said at the time that a prototype of the Shahab-3 would be ready in 1999 if Russian aid to Iran continued unhindered. The source said the missile could possibly carry non-conventional warheads.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin denied last year that Russian companies are aiding Iranian missile and nuclear programmes.

Netanyahu threatens reprisals on anniversary of Oslo accords

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel on Sunday threatened severe reprisals if Hamas tries to avenge the killing of two of its leaders and accused the Palestinians of violating the Oslo peace accords by not fighting terrorism.

"Israel will respond severely if Hamas goes ahead with its threat to carry out large scale attacks," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told a cabinet meeting on the fifth anniversary of the historic signing of the accords by Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and then Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

"We will not tolerate attacks against our citizens and will hit the killer organisations hard," he said.

Hamas, an activist Palestinian group which has killed scores of Israelis, has threatened to carry out "painful" reprisals for the Thursday killing by Israel of Adel and Imad Awadallah, two of the Jewish state's most wanted men.

Major General Moshe Yaalon said Israel was taking the threats seriously but noted that the West Bank branch of the movement's armed wing Izzeddin Al Qassam had been weakened by the slaying and a series of other recent setbacks.

Adel Awadallah, 31, was the head of Qassam on the West Bank. His brother and right-hand man Imad, 29, had been arrested by Palestinian police earlier this year but escaped in

unclear circumstances from a jail in Jericho on Aug. 15.

Yaalon, who heads the army command responsible for the West Bank, declined to confirm or deny press reports that Palestinian security forces helped the Israelis track down the Awadallah brothers.

However a senior army intelligence official categorically denied that Palestinian police had played any role in locating the Awadallahs.

Yaalon also said Israel would not hand over their bodies to their families and would bury them itself to prevent violence.

"We will not give the bodies back, I'm sure it would be a negative step which will provoke a lot of violence, especially in Ramallah [home to the Awadallah family]," Yaalon told reporters.

Five Palestinians, including a seven-year-old girl, were injured in clashes with Israeli soldiers near Bethlehem during protests over the killings. Similar demonstrations on Saturday left more than 100 Palestinians wounded by Israeli gunfire.

Netanyahu said the Palestinian National Authority had violated the peace accords by not working hard enough to clamp down on militant groups such as — Hamas.

"The signing of the Oslo accords initiated great expectations, but the Palestinians have not waged war against terrorism, which was at the heart of the accords," he said.

adding that "more Israelis have been killed in terrorist attacks since the signing of the Oslo accords than in the 15 years that preceded them."

But former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres, one of the chief architects of the accords, said Netanyahu "is mistaken from A to Z, because to wage a fight peoples will forever hate and threaten each other or create two states which will have good neighbourly relations," against terrorism you need to create a confidence with the PNA.

That confidence "disappeared" after Netanyahu's 1996 election, he said. But Netanyahu declared Israel was ready to transfer "new territories to the Palestinians, even though they are part of our heritage, on condition that the Palestinians fulfill their obligations by fighting against Hamas."

The prime minister's refusal to commit to a U.S. proposal for Israel to withdraw from a further 13.1 per cent of the West Bank, which the Palestinians have already accepted, has kept peace talks at an impasse.

U.S. envoy Dennis Ross met with both Israeli and Palestinian leaders in recent days to unblock the negotiations but during a visit to Egypt on Sunday he said the two sides were still far apart.

27 killed in fresh Algeria violence

ALGIERS (AFP) — Twenty-seven people were killed and two others seriously wounded overnight by an armed group in the region of Ain Defla, 150 kilometres west of the Algerian capital. Algerian security services said Monday.

They said the victims were "cowardly assassinated" in the massacre, which took place in the village of Sidi-Sbaa, in the municipality of Miliana.

"The security services have launched an intensive search and pursuit of the perpetrators of this criminal act," the source said.

Turkish troops kill 22 rebel Kurds in worst clashes since truce

DIYARBAKIR (AFP) — Turkish troops killed 22 separatist Kurdish rebels in the country's troubled Southeast at the weekend in the heaviest fighting since a truce declared by the rebels took effect two weeks ago, security officials said Monday.

The worst clash was in a mountainous area in Sinak province near the Iraqi border when 16 members of the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) were killed, they told AFP.

The fighting was continuing Monday, with army units sending reinforcements to the area, the officials said.

Six other PKK members were killed in four separate and smaller clashes in neighbouring Batman, Diyarbakir, Hakkari and Tunceli provinces.

The officials made no mention of any Turkish casualties.

The fighting reports came shortly after PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan was quoted by the press as saying that his group was putting an end to its ceasefire, which had been in effect since September 1.

"They [Turkey] did not abide by the truce we declared," the English-language Turkish Daily News on Sunday quoted Ocalan as saying on the pro-PKK television channel Med-TV, broadcasting from Europe.

"We have developed new war tactics and will intensify our attacks," Ocalan reportedly said.

Ocalan announced an unconditional and unilateral ceasefire in August that was to come into effect on September 1 and last until the Turkish elections next April.

But the Turkish government and army rejected the truce, accusing the PKK of trying to gain time to regroup its weakened forces and calling on Ocalan to surrender.

"The PKK's so-called ceasefire has been prompted by the fact that it has lost its military strength over the past few years. The PKK simply wants to gain time through that truce, but we will not play that game," Aydin Arslan, regional governor of Turkey's embattled southeast, said.

Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz also dismissed the ceasefire offer, saying the government would never accept the rebel leader as a negotiating partner.

Chief of Staff Huseyin Kivrikoglu called on Ocalan to surrender to the state or abandon the armed rebellion with all his men. "There is no other way," Kivrikoglu said.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 4773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:10 Cartoon — The Pink Panther
15:30 Small Talk — "Quiz Show"
16:00 Drama — Neighbours
16:30 Doc. — Life Choices
17:00 Doc. — Royal Blood
18:00 French Programmes
Les Cœurs Brulés
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 French Programme — Fractales
19:30 News headlines
19:35 Step by Step — "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner"
20:00 What Would You Do?
20:30 Encounter
21:10 Mini-series — An Independent Man (Ep. 7)
22:00 News in English
22:30 Lonesome Dove
23:59 Feature film — Harmful Intent
01:30 End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:56 Fajr
06:14 (Sunrise) Dhuha
12:31 Dhuhr
16:02 'Asr
18:48 Maghreb
20:06 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweidat, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Relative warm weather conditions will prevail with temperatures rising slightly and winds northwesterly to northeasterly moderate. In Amman, it will be hot, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.
Amman 20/34
Aqaba 26/39
Deserts 18/36
Jordan Valley 26/39

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 32, Aqaba 38 Humidity readings: Amman 30 per cent, Aqaba 40 per cent.
Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:
Amman 27
Jerash 33
Um Qays 32
Madaba 31
Petra 33
Dead Sea 38

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Walid Masri 5675485
Telephone Information (directory

WEATHER

Dr. Ahmad Mannas 5359413
Dr. Youssef Rashid 4875792
Dr. Mahmoud Amir 4888883
Al Assana pharmacy 4637055
Al Salama pharmacy 4636730
Shmeisani pharmacy 4637660
Nabroukh pharmacy 4623672

IRBID:

Dr. Issam Salih 246858
Al Quds pharmacy 985417

ZARQA:

Dr. Walid Hatahet 982799
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 4637111
Civil Defence Department 5661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 4630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 4621111, 4637777
Fire Brigade 4617101
Blood Bank 4775121
Highway Police 5343402
Traffic Police 4896390
Public Security Dept. 4630321
Hotel Complaints 5605800
Price Complaints 5661176
Water & Sewerage Complaints 4897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 4787111
Amal Hospital 5674155
ZARQA:

AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921199
The Islamic, Abdul 5666131/7
Husseini Medical Centre Tel. 5856856
Luzmila 4630195
Khalidi Maternity 4642816
Akileh Maternity 4642411/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362
Malhas, J. Amman 4636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 5607071
Shmeisani Hospital 5669131
University Hospital 5353444
Al-Muasher Hospital 5667279
Al-Ahli, Abdali 56641646
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 4777101/3
Al-Bashir 4775111/26
Army, Marka 4891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 56224050
Amal Hospital 5674155
ZARQA:

HOSPITALS

Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09983333
Zarqa National Hospital 09900250
Ibn Sina Hospital 09986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital 09990999

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital 02725555
Greek Catholic Hospital 0272275
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital 021247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital 03314111

Other Flights

09:00 Cairo (MS)
13:00 Riyadh (SV)
13:30 Aden (TY)
14:25 Munich (LH)
15:00 Istanbul (TK)
16:10 Bahrain, Doha (GF)
16:10 Dubai (EK)
18:05 Kiev (6U)
19:00 Paris (AF)
20:25 Tel Aviv (LY)
22:30 Beirut (ME)
23:35 Larnaca (CY)
23:40 Amsterdam (KL)
00:55 Bucharest (RO)
03:00 Rome (AZ)
04:25 London (BA)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights

10:20 Aqaba (arriving at QAIA and proceeding to Marka Airport) (RW)
19:20 Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA) (RW)
18:00 Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)
23:25 Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:10 Tehran (RJ)
07:30 Damascus (RJ)
08:05 Samaa (RJ)
10:15 Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)
10:40 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
10:45 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
11:25 Beirut (RJ)
17:00 Cairo (RJ)
19:00 London, Frankfurt (RJ)
21:50 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)

Other Flights

09:00 Cairo (MS)
13:00 Riyadh (SV)
13:30 Aden (TY)
14:25 Munich (LH)
15:00 Istanbul (TK)
16:10 Bahrain, Doha (GF)
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21:50 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)

12:35

Berlin, Frankfurt (RJ)
13:00 Geneva, Brussels (RJ)

13:10

Paris (RJ)
13:15 Cairo (RJ)
14:05 Madrid (RJ)
21:25 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:25 Jeddah (RJ)
22:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:40 Damascus (RJ)

Other Flights

07:25 Frankfurt (LH)
10:00 Cairo (MS)
14:30 Riyadh (SV)
14:30 Aden (TY)
15:15 Munich (YP)
16:00 Istanbul (TK)
17:20 Doha, Bahrain (GF)
17:20 Dubai (EK)
19:05 Kiev (6U)
21:10 Tel Aviv (LY)
23:55 Beirut (ME)
00:40 Beirut, Amsterdam (KL)
01:55 Bucharest (RO)
04:00 Rome (AZ)
06:25 Larnaca (CY)
07:30 Paris (AF)
09:20 London (BA)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights

08:00 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
09:30 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
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21:30 Aqaba (from QAIA) (RW)

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Regent meets with Shahak

By Alfa A. Toukan

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and former Israeli Army Chief of Staff Amnon Shahak met Monday in Amman.

According to a source requesting anonymity, Prince Hassan and Shahak discussed the "current status of [Palestinian-Israeli] negotiations," security-related issues, and ways to enhance bilateral economic ties.

Shahak, who was in Amman on a private visit, finished his term as army chief early July. Israeli reports indicate that he is contemplating entering into politics, and opinion polls place him ahead of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Labour leader Ehud Barak. He is also reportedly considering going into business or the public sector.

Still in active army service for the next 10 months, Shahak has so far been careful not to disclose his political views.



Health Minister Na'el Ajlouni cuts the ribbon Monday at the new health centre in Abu Nusseir (Petra photo).

Health minister Ajlouni opens medical complex

AMMAN (Petra) — Health Minister Na'el Ajlouni on Monday opened Abu Nusseir Comprehensive Health Care Centre, which consists of an X-ray section, a lab, a pharmacy and an emergency unit.

Speaking at the ceremony, Ajlouni said the ministry is seeking to expand its services throughout the country to benefit all citizens.

He added that the ministry can supply 99 per cent of patients with medicine without resorting to alternatives.

The acting director general of Amman Governorate's Health Care Department, Mohammad Turk, said the centre will provide all types of treatment, including dental and maternal services, among others.

The director of the Abu Nusseir centre, Musa Khalil, said the centre will offer services to approximately 150,000 citizens and can accommodate about 450 people per day.

The minister and the accompanying delegation toured the centre and inspected its various sections.

Germany cancels 40 million marks in Jordanian debt

AMMAN (Petra) — Germany has cancelled 40 million marks of Jordanian debt due this month with the provision that 20 million marks be spent on environment-protection projects, according to an agreement signed Monday in Amman.

Acting Finance Minister Taher Kanaan, who signed the agreement with Richard Avedikian, head of the Middle East desk at the German Development Bank, said Jordan will also be exempted from paying interest due on the 40 million marks.

Speaking after the signing ceremony, Kanaan said that under the terms of the agreement, the country must carry out the stipulated environmentally-related projects by the end of October 2008.

This is the third agreement of its kind between the two sides, according to a German embassy official, who said that in June 1995, Germany cancelled 29.5 million marks of debt. In October of the same year, it cancelled 50 million marks of Jordan's debt under a similar arrangement.

Kanaan said the aid is vital in helping Jordan strengthen its national economy.

German Ambassador to Jordan Peter Mende, who attended the signing ceremony at the Ministry of Planning, said the new arrangement will help further bolster ties between Germany and Jordan.

The conclusion of the agreement followed talks held at the Ministry of Planning by the German delegation, led by Avedikian, and Planning Minister Nabil Ammari on revising projects being implemented through German aid for the coming year.

The talks are considered a preliminary to the official meetings, which the two sides will hold in the first quarter of 1999.

The German delegation, which arrived in Amman on Sunday for a three-day visit, will tour German-funded projects in the country.

Two arrested in connection with murder of University of Jordan professor

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — Two Arab nationals were arrested Monday in connection with the murder of a University of Jordan professor on Saturday, officials said.

"We have arrested two suspects and are still searching for a third, all Arab nationals," police officials said.

The body of Abdul Na'eem Abu Wendy, 45, an international law professor, was found in the stables of his farm in Ma'in by a shepherd, who heard gunshots coming from the stable, according to official reports.

Madaba Police Director Brigadier General Mislleh Mahadin told reporters during a press conference Monday that "initial investigations indicated that the three suspects were employed by the victim, and they disappeared immediately after the murder was discovered."

"After combing the area, we arrested a 26-year-old man who was a guard at the farm, and he confessed to committing the crime with the help of the two other suspects," the police official said.

Police surgeons who examined the body said they extracted five bullets which they said were fired from a Barrett automatic weapon.

"We have intensified our investigations and expect to arrest the third suspect soon," Mahadin said.

Police continue search for missing girl

Also in the Madaba governorate, police and residents of Faisaliyah village continued to search for a 12-year-old girl who was reported missing more than three weeks ago.

May Hazzaa, a seventh grader, reportedly left her home on the morning of Aug. 22 to take a make-up examination at her school but never returned.

Last week, police placed a missing notice and photograph of the child in local newspapers, but received no calls or responses, officials said.

A police official told the Jordan Times Monday evening that "we are optimistic about finding her."

The girl's parents, who issued a public appeal following her disappearance, were informed by Faisaliyah residents that their daughter was last seen walking down the village's main road the day she disappeared.

Others reported seeing her at a local bakery and at a store instead of her original destination, the school.

Police and family members are searching throughout the Madaba governorate, including caves, wells and hills.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Education minister meets Canadian envoy

AMMAN (Petra) — Education Minister Fawzi Gharaibeh and Canadian Ambassador to Jordan Michael Malloy on Monday discussed cooperation between the two countries in educational fields, particularly training English and mathematics teachers. They also discussed vocational training and scholarships.

Trade minister meets with Lebanese envoy

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Industry and Trade Mohammad Saleh Horani on Monday received Lebanese Ambassador William Habib, with whom he discussed bilateral cooperation in economic and trade fields and means of activating trade agreements. The two sides also discussed holding industrial exhibitions in both countries.

Tarawneh visits wounded officer

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh on Monday visited Lieutenant Ra'ed Khsaba, who is currently recuperating at Jordan University Hospital from gunshot wounds received from unidentified assailants. Tarawneh wished him a speedy recovery and commended his courage along with his colleague, the late sergeant Mohammad Shahr Ajarmeh. Tarawneh also paid a condolence visit to the Ajarmeh home.

Parliamentarians meet with Arafat

RAMALLAH (Petra) — A parliamentary delegation currently visiting Palestinian National Authority areas was received on Monday by PNA President Yasser Arafat. The delegation and Arafat reviewed the latest developments in the peace process. President Arafat wished His Majesty King Hussein a speedy recovery and a safe return home. The delegation, headed by Deputy Nawwaf Khawaldeh, later held talks with Ghazi Hamanya, deputy president of the Palestinian Legislative Council, on ways of boosting bilateral cooperation, particularly in parliamentary fields. The delegation also held talks with PNA Information Yasser Abed Rabbo. The parliamentarians will visit Bethlehem, Hebron and Gaza.

Israeli embassy announces visa guidelines

AMMAN (Petra) — The Israeli embassy issued a statement Monday announcing that it will grant one-time visas valid for six months to persons wishing to visit Israel and the PNA areas. The statement requested that those wishing to visit in the summer apply during the months of March, April and May.

Seminar on refugees, human rights opens

MA'IN (Petra) — A two-day seminar entitled "Refugees and Human Rights" opened Monday at the Ma'in Spa southwest of Madaba with the participation of 25 Interior Ministry employees.

Participants in the seminar, organised by the Interior Ministry in conjunction with the office of the U.N. Higher Commission for Refugees, will review four working papers on legal aspects in dealing with the refugees in general and women and children in particular, as well as refugee-related human rights issues.

Speaking at the opening session, Madaba Governor Nashaat Majali said the government is seeking to provide assistance to refugees who are eligible for UNHCR care and is cooperating closely with the UNHCR office in Amman.

The seminar, Majali noted, was organised to orient government officials on dealing with day-to-day issues connected with refugees.

The government is giving due consideration to humanitarian issues out of its commitment to upholding the U.N. charter and its resolutions, added Majali.

The government and the UNHCR signed a memorandum in April 1997 on establishing its office in Amman in order to organise care for refugees. Under the provisions of the memorandum, Jordan exempts refugees under the care of the UNHCR from paying fines for overstaying in the Kingdom and arranges passage for refugees to their home or a third country in conjunction with the commission, he added.

Majali said that since the office was established, a total of JD397,174 in fees owed by refugees who overstayed have been waived. The refugees were also exempted from fees upon departure at the airport and border posts, he noted.

Iranian refugees crossing into Jordan from Iraq on their way to settle in a third country also enjoy these exemptions, added Majali.

But Majali stressed that the idea of settling refugees in Jordan is "totally unacceptable."

He pointed out that the government has established a special department at the Interior Ministry exclusively for handling refugees affairs, coordinating its steps with the UNHCR office.

Majali expressed hope that the existing close cooperation with U.N. agencies would be further strengthened.

A UNHCR representative said the seminar is one aspect of the office's cooperation with the government and expressed hope that further seminars would be held in Jordan.

Tunisian film festival opens

By Randa Naffa

AMMAN — The Tunisian Film Festival opened yesterday at the main theatre of the Royal Cultural Centre.

During the week-long festival, organised by the Tunisian Embassy, the Abdul Hameed Shorman Foundation and the Municipality of Greater Amman, viewers will see six films by several renowned Tunisian directors. All films featured have been shown at international film festivals, organisers said.

The Film Week will allow Jordanian audiences to experience some of the best Tunisian films since 1980," said Nabeel Khatib from the cultural department at the municipality.

"Through this cultural activity, we hope to introduce Tunisian cinema, which is not really known to the Jordanian viewers," said Khatib.

Tickets are free and films will be shown at 8 p.m. each night.

"Tickets are not being sold to encourage the public to attend and offer them a chance to watch and interact with Tunisian culture," added Khatib.



SHEPHERD TENDS TO A HERD OF GOATS: A young shepherd tends after his herd of goats near Amman (Photo by Yousef Allam).

Jordan marks annual Architectural Day today

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan today marks Architectural Heritage Day in order to bring attention to the Kingdom's Arab and Islamic heritage.

Architectural Heritage Day was called for in recommendations by governmental and non-governmental organisations at a meeting in September 1997.

Speaking on the eve of the day, Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Tawfiq Kreishan said the ministry is working to protect the Kingdom's Arab and Islamic buildings and monuments.

The government is seeking financial assistance from international organisations to help restore the country's cultural heritage, he said. The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment, Kreishan added, is revising laws and regulations concerning the preservation of heritage buildings.

Mirvat Hoish, head of the heritage department at the ministry, said the first conference on architectural heritage held last year recommended that September 15 of each year be dedicated as a day to mark Jordan's architectural heritage.

She said the conference also called for an integrated strategy for the preservation of the country's heritage.

The committee views with satisfaction the efforts exerted by the state in hosting Palestinian refugees and facilitating their incorporation in the Kingdom while preserving their identity," the U.N. body said in a press release.

U.N. committee commends Jordan's refugee efforts, Parliament allocations

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Geneva-based U.N. Committee for Combating Racial Discrimination this week completed its review of Jordan's report and commended the Kingdom for hosting Palestinian refugees, allocating an adequate number of seats for minorities in Parliament and licensing a human rights group.

"The committee views with satisfaction the efforts exerted by the state in hosting Palestinian refugees and facilitating their incorporation in the Kingdom while preserving their identity," the U.N. body said in a press release.

"The committee welcomes the creation of a national centre for human rights in Jordan," the release said.

The committee also "views with satisfaction that a number of seats were allocated to minorities in Parliament."

The committee said it also examined a parallel report by the Jordan human rights organisation.

The committee, however, expressed concern that Jordanian law does not provide for the full application of the fourth article of the U.N. agreement on ending racial discrimination.

The committee said it reviewed the government's report and noted that the difficult economic situation in Jordan is adversely affecting efforts for the full implementation of the international agreement on combating racial discrimination.

WHAT'S GOING ON

TUNISIAN FILM FESTIVAL

* "Majnoon Laya" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m. (Another film "The Lost Pigeon's Necklace" will be screened on Wednesday Sept. 16 at 8:00 p.m.).

EXHIBITIONS

* Photography exhibition entitled "Les Cite's d'Artistes a Paris" at the premises of the Association of the Jordanian Plastic Artists, Jabal Weibdeh, until Sept. 30.

* Paintings by Iraqi artists Ismail Sheikhly, Suzanne Sheikhly, and Khalid Qasab entitled Pioneers of the Fifties" at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Utheina, until Sept. 21 (Tel. 5526932).

* Paintings by Rula Shukairy at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Amman, until Sept. 30.

* Exhibition of wrought iron furniture by Jordanian artist Salim Al Baidar at Al Baidar Hall, Kan Zaman village (Tel. 5862531), until Sept. 17.

DARAT AL FUNUN SUMMER '98 FESTIVAL

* "Summer '98" cultural activities at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, to last until Sept. 30, include:

* Concert by pianist Agnes Bashir (performing some of her compositions to be followed by a lecture about her own musical experience) at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* 50 years of graphic art from Lebanon and works by Jordanian artist Sahel Filali at the Main House.

* Works by Iraqi artist Samer Usama and by Jordanian artist Said Haddadin at the Blue House.

* Installation works by Jordanian artist Samia Zaru at the Byzantine Church.

* Exhibition of photographs "Memory of a Place" by Jordanian artist Hussein Da'sh at the Museum.

Albanian capital in turmoil after killings

TIRANA (AP) — Gunfire broke out Monday and tanks lumbered through Albania's capital after protesters carried the bodies of a slain politician and two others to the office of Prime Minister Fatos Nano, whom the opposition blames for the deaths.

Thousands of mourners scattered in terror as guards inside the main government building began firing at those who brought the bodies of opposition leader Azem Hajdari and two others to Nano's office following a service at Skanderbeg Square.

The situation rapidly deteriorated and within an hour, the government appeared to be losing control of the capital.

Thousands of people were milling about Tirana's Skanderbeg Square, firing weapons in the air.

Opposition leader Sali Berisha, who has called for Nano's immediate resignation, appealed for calm Monday in a televised address. He urged his followers to seek a political solution to "this deep crisis." The unrest threatened a repeat of riots that swept the country last year after the collapse of pyramid investment schemes that cost many Albanians their entire savings.

The United States and the European Union have expressed fear that the turmoil could spread elsewhere in the Balkans, including the Serbian province of Kosovo. Berisha has openly supported Kosovo Albanian rebels, who maintain sanctuaries in northern Albania and are fighting for independence from Serbia.

In Tirana, there was little sign Monday of police or any government authority. Calls to the

prime minister's office and the Interior Ministry went unanswered.

Local radio reported that "civilian patrols" were taking up positions near banks and government facilities to protect them from looters.

Monday's gunfire, in which at least three protesters were wounded, triggered what appeared to be a spontaneous uprising throughout Tirana.

One group stormed the government's television studios, sending many of the staff fleeing. An unidentified man appeared on television, announcing "we have taken over."

Opposition members seized at least four government tanks, and civilians climbed atop the vehicles while they moved down the streets.

A private television reported this afternoon that crowds had also entered the parliament building.

Young men were breaking into shops, which had closed for Hajdari's funeral, and could be seen carrying off jeans and other goods. A luxury hotel on Skanderbeg Square sealed off its entrances.

Monday's violence erupted after a funeral service for Hajdari and his bodyguard — slain Saturday outside their Democratic Party headquarters — and a protester who was killed during rioting Sunday.

During the funeral, Berisha repeated allegations that Nano was responsible for Hajdari's death and called for a "day of peace" to honour the charismatic former student leader.

After the ceremony, the crowd carried the bodies — each in a wooden coffin — down the capital's main street



Albanians shout anti-government and victory slogans Monday in Tirana's main boulevard, Martyrs of the Nation, as they protest on a tank seized earlier from government forces. Violence erupted in the Albanian capital Tirana on Monday during the funeral of slain opposition politician Azem Hajdari as anti-government protesters seized several tanks deployed to defend Prime Minister Fatos Nano and the state-owned Albanian radio and television (Reuters photo)

to the prime minister's office, which was attacked and set afire Sunday.

The building appeared deserted. Suddenly, as mourners placed the coffins at the entrance, gunfire broke out, apparently from guards inside the building. Hundreds of terrified marchers trampled over one another to escape.

An opposition radio station reported Monday that Nano had resigned. The local office

of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe denied the report.

Nevertheless, the report set off a celebration among mourners, many of whom drew back from the building. Carloads of opposition supporters, waving national flags, raced through the streets.

Envoyes from the United States and the European Union issued a joint statement deploring the violence and hinting

that they might cut off economic aid if the government falls.

"The government will... take necessary decisions to avoid conflicts and bloodshed," Nano's office said Sunday. Nano called on the people "to be calm and not permit armed crowds to violate the state institutions."

President Rexhep Meidani, who broke off a trip to Greece, said Sunday that the "tragic murder" of Hajdari "should not

lead to a repetition of last year's chaos, for which we all paid dearly." In last year's Albanian unrest, more than a million weapons were looted from government armories, and many of the guns ended up in Kosovo.

Greece warned Monday that the violence could destroy democracy and stability in Albania. Greece was swamped by thousands of refugees fleeing last year's turmoil.

Attack on Congo town overshadows peace plans

GOMA (R) — Hutu fighters and their allies attacked rebels in the eastern Congo town of Goma Monday, overshadowing peace efforts and further complicating the civil war.

Tutsi-led rebels, whose battle against President Laurent Kabila is based in Goma, said Hutu fighters with links to the Rwanda genocide attacked Goma early Monday.

Rebel military leader Jean-Pierre Ondekane told Reuters the fighters attacked the airport and the radio station, but added the attack had been repulsed after around five hours and a platoon of up to 700 pro-Hutu fighters captured.

"The enemy — ex-FAR [Rwandan army], Interahamwe and Mai Mai — attacked Goma airport and a radio transmitter, but we have totally destroyed our enemies," Ondekane said in a radio broadcast.

If there is confirmation that Hutu fighters attacked, it will complicate peace efforts by entrenching the Hutu-Tutsi conflict that has poisoned Rwanda and Burundi at the heart of the civil war in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly Zaire.

Southern African leaders at a regional economic summit in Mauritius Monday were to press on with efforts to end the conflict, urging Kabila to meet the rebels.

Kabila arrived earlier Monday to attend the Southern African Development Community (SADC) summit. Peace efforts have been stalemated by Kabila's refusal to face his opponents at the negotiating table.

Officials say this position — echoing the intransigence of veteran Zaire strongman Mobutu Sese Seko before Kabila overthrew him in May 1997 — must yield to the need

for peace. "What is clear to us is that [the Congo conflict] will be decided in the long run by those who are at loggerheads. That is, the government of the country together with the rebels. There can be no other way," said South African Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo at the summit.

The rebels took up arms against Kabila on Aug. 2. Backed by Rwanda and Uganda, they seized Goma and a string of other towns in Kivu province before leaping to the west and taking a string of towns on the Atlantic coast.

The military intervention of Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe on Kabila's side halted the rebel advance in the west.

The rebels, led by ethnic Tutsi Banyamulenge people, accused Kabila of a string of abuses but also said he was guilty of pursuing a violently anti-Tutsi ethnic agenda.

The Hutu-Tutsi conflict in Rwanda and Burundi, which led to the 1994 Rwanda genocide mainly of Tutsis, has already spilled over into the former Zaire.

More than a million Hutu refugees fled there in 1994 and extremist Hutu elements behind the genocide used the forests of eastern Congo as a base to launch an insurgency campaign against Rwanda's Tutsi-led army.

It now appears that those extremist Hutu fighters have taken up arms against the rebellion to oust Kabila because of its links to the Rwandan army.

Rwanda has so far denied military involvement in Congo — despite numerous reports to the contrary — and has accused Kabila of training Hutu fighters and said that he is fomenting genocide against them.

Primakov plots response to crisis

MOSCOW (AP) — New Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov pledged Monday to continue reforms but said he would also work to protect Russian citizens from the painful effects of the country's economic crisis.

"This is a national government and it must take care of the interests of Russia and its people," Primakov said at the cabinet meeting. "We can't carry out reforms that have a negative impact on people."

Primakov, a former Russian foreign minister and spy chief, was easily approved Friday by a parliament that had earlier rejected President Boris Yeltsin's first choice for prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin.

Primakov has appointed Communists to key economic posts, but said the government will stay the course with reforms and will not return to a Soviet-style command economy.

"We must introduce certain changes and we shall do that to continue our forward move-

ment and not go back," he told cabinet members. "Some people were too hasty to paint the government in one colour — red."

Still, leading liberals have said that Primakov's government may try to introduce Communist-era administrative controls and reverse free-market reforms.

"It's quite obvious that their course is aimed at destabilising the country's finances and dismantling elements of free-market economy," former Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar said on Echo Moscow radio.

Yuri Maslyukov, a senior Communist lawmaker, has been named first deputy premier in charge of economic policy in the new cabinet. He served as head of the Soviet central planning agency, Gosplan, in the late 1980s.

Viktor Gerashchenko, the new head of the Central Bank, has been criticised by Western economists for generously printing money to help ailing industries when he was the

chief Soviet and then Russian banker in 1989-1994.

Speaking in a television interview Sunday, Primakov defended his new team as a group of professionals that would seek to stabilise the economy. However, he provided few details of his economic programme, saying it was still in the works.

During a brief cabinet meeting Monday, Primakov stressed the need to strengthen the government's social welfare policies.

Maslyukov said the new cabinet's top priority would be to pay off wage and pension arrears.

"The very first anti-crisis measures of the new government will be solving problems of the wage debt as well as at least partial settlement of the pension issue," he said.

Meanwhile, Primakov also planned to hold separate meetings Monday with union leaders and the country's top bankers to discuss the financial crisis.

Kenyan legislators accuse government of harassment

NAIROBI (AP) — Muslim legislators Monday accused Kenya's government of harassment after it banned six Muslim relief agencies and ordered four of their executive officers to leave the country within seven days.

"We see this as very unfair: it is a communal punishment for the Muslims," said Hussein Maslim, a deputy from northeastern Kenya as well as Minister for Rural Development.

"These are not normal NGOs, they are religious organisations. Next time, they might tell us to close a mosque," he said.

The government enacted the ban after investigators reportedly discovered that explosives used to destroy the U.S. Embassy came into Kenya in relief shipments handled by a Muslim aid agency.

The Aug. 7 bombing killed 247 people. A nearly simulta-

neous terrorist attack on the U.S. Embassy neighbouring Tanzania killed 11 people.

The relief agencies have been running health centres, schools and orphanages for Muslims and non-Muslims, mainly in northeastern Kenya, he said.

Authorities and academics estimate Kenya's Muslim population at between 5 to 10 per cent of the 29 million total. Muslim leaders say the figure is closer to 30 per cent.

"As we are speaking here, no fire has been lit to prepare food for orphans and patients in centres run by the banned agencies," said deputy Abdullah Ali, also from northeastern Kenya.

The 12 legislators, 10 of whom belong to the ruling Kenya African National Union party, said the government has to reconsider the ban, or Muslims will resort to mass

action.

"We have been supporting the government, we cannot continue to say we will support the government if the government is not supporting us," Maslim said.

The NGO Coordinating Board, which registers all NGOs, last week banned 16 agencies, including the six Muslim groups, alleging they "had been found to be working against the interests of Kenyans in terms of security," Maslim claimed the other 11 NGOs were not active.

Maslim said the legislators believed U.S. pressure led to the ban. He said Muslims were singled out because U.S. authorities claim the bombing was masterminded by Saudi terrorist Osama Ben Laden, a militant Muslim.

"We have no business with terrorists," he said. "That is very high politics for the rich people. We are very poor."

New N. Ireland assembly opens

BELFAST (AFP) — The new semi-autonomous Northern Ireland assembly was inaugurated Monday, ushering in a new political era as the first major institutional pillar of the April peace agreement came into being.

The province's divided politicians were soon at odds with one another — over the British flag, the parliament's location on the site of the former Protestant-dominated assembly at Stormont outside Belfast and the use of Irish language.

But all agreed on the historic significance of the event, as words replaced bombs and bullets after 29 years of conflict.

Deputy First Minister

Seamus Mallon of the moderate Catholic SDLP party said: "It's another historic day."

The leader of Sinn Fein, the political wing of the IRA, Gerry Adams, said it was important now to meet the challenges and move forward towards the full implementation of the peace agreement.

His pro-unionist Irish party wants to see a key aspect of the accord rapidly set up — under which cross-border structures will give the Irish Republic a formal say in the province's affairs for the first time.

Monday's session brought the 108 Protestant and Catholic members of the locally-elected parliament into the debating chamber of parliament build-

ings for the first time — the seat of the old Stormont regime which shut down 27 years ago.

The first obstacle is the demand in the Protestant camp that the Irish Republican Army begin to disarm before Sinn Fein is permitted to enter the new cabinet running the province — a condition the republican party rejects.

With 18 seats in the assembly, Sinn Fein should be entitled to two ministerial posts.

But the first minister, moderate Protestant Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble, seems ready to delay, until Christmas if necessary, the formation of the 10-member cabinet in the hope of prior IRA disarmament.

Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern, who made it clear last week that he did not see decommissioning as a precondition for the inclusion of Sinn Fein in the new Northern Ireland executive, called for urgent implementation of the deal.

"I am confident that the IRA ceasefire is definite and that the use of violence by them is over, done and gone, as we hope it is on all sides," he said.

Time is running out: by February 1999, in less than six months, London is due to transfer powers to the "shadow" assembly, which will have authority over all areas except defence, police, foreign policy and tax.

Salvage ship ready to retrieve wreckage of plane

HALIFAX (AP) — A Picasso painting, diamonds and possibly millions of dollars in currency and gold are resting on the ocean floor off Nova Scotia in the twisted wreckage of Swissair Flight 111.

The USS Grapple, a Navy salvage ship capable of winching 300-ton pieces to the surface, prepared Monday to begin lifting large chunks of the jetliner and its contents to the surface. The operation could help investigators determine why the plane crashed.

The Grapple, which recovered pieces of TWA Flight 800 off Long Island in 1996, was moored over the crash site Monday.

Lt. John Oliveira, spokesman for the Grapple, said the lift would begin as soon as Canadian authorities gave approval, after bodies and body parts were recovered.

The primary targets are five sections of fuselage sitting in about 58 metres of water 10 kilometres off shore.

In Zurich, Switzerland, Swissair official Klaus Knappik said Monday that a Picasso painting worth an estimated \$1.5 million, "The Painter," was aboard the flight and had been destroyed.

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Unofficial Bosnia vote results show ethnic divide remains

SARAJEVO (R) — Unofficial results of Bosnia's weekend general elections began to trickle in Monday, showing that while Muslim voters had moved towards moderation, Serbs and Croats were more set than ever on ethnic separation.

In the Serb half of the divided country, the hardline Radical Party said its candidate, Nikola Poplasen, had dislodged more moderate Biljana Plavcic as president of the Bosnian Serb Republic.

The Radicals also said that results from 93 per cent of polling stations showed that Momcilo Krajisnik of the SDS party, once led by war leader and indicted war criminal Radovan Karadzic, had held onto the Serb seat

on the country's three-man co-presidency.

Sarajevo newspapers said the nationalist coalition headed by President Alija Izetbegovic had lost ground to opposition parties.

But Bosnian Croat sources claimed huge majorities among Croat voters for their main nationalist party, the HDZ.

None of the claims could be independently verified, but if the radicals' report was confirmed it would be a bitter blow to Western hopes that the elections would show an advance, however modest, towards reintegrating the ethnically divided country.

In the Bosnian Serb capital Banja Luka, Roger Bryant of the Organisation for Security and

Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) which organised the elections, had seen the Radical Party claims but preferred not to comment on them.

"We don't take any position on figures given by the parties; we prefer to wait for the official results," he told Reuters.

In the Serb republic, the Radicals said Poplasen led Plavcic by 46.7 per cent to 37.2 per cent.

Moderate parties looked set to retain control of the separate Bosnian Serb assembly but the Radicals said Krajisnik was leading moderate Zivko Radisic for the co-presidency seat by 45 per cent to 38 per cent.

In Sarajevo, the daily Dnevni Avaz, seen as close to the ruling Muslim-led

coalition, said that with 35 per cent of the vote counted, the opposition Social Democrats were running only one or two percent behind in Sarajevo Canton — the area around the capital.

In the city itself, it said the coalition vote had held up better, and it was leading by 10 per cent.

The opposition parties looked set to retain their hold on the northeastern town of Tuzla, the only large Bosnian community not run by nationalists, but were unlikely to achieve their hope of taking Tuzla canton as a whole, where Izetbegovic's coalition had 60 per cent of the vote so far counted.

Other newspapers said the coalition was, as expected, leading by large majorities in several towns in heavily

Muslim-dominated parts of the country.

In Croat-held areas to the west, a spokesman for the HDZ said the party had won more than 85 per cent of the Croat vote.

"It seems that results would be even better than we hoped," said Nedeljko Herceg, head of the HDZ's electoral board.

If the results are confirmed, they would serve a blow to international envoys who believe multi-ethnicity is the only way ahead for the country, where more than 200,000 people were killed during the 1992-95 war.

Inter-ethnic peace is at present safeguarded by some 32,000 NATO-led international troops.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Clinton raising profile in NYC

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bill Clinton is trying to resume his mantle of leadership with a series of public appearances, while members of Congress weigh whether they should begin the impeachment process against him. Clinton was flying to New York Monday to talk about global economic problems before the Council on Foreign Relations. Meantime, his lawyers defended him on the television talk-show circuit as a man who had a regrettable affair with a former White House intern but did nothing severe enough to warrant being ousted from office.

Refugee commission appeals to Montenegro

PRISTINA (AP) — Following Montenegro's deportation of 3,200 ethnic Albanians, the U.N. refugee agency is appealing to the Yugoslav republic to reverse its decision to deny sanctuary to refugees fleeing fighting in Kosovo. "We are appealing to Montenegro to keep its borders open, otherwise the problem will expand," Paul Stromberg, a spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, said Monday in Geneva, Switzerland. Sunday, Montenegro transported the Kosovo refugees by bus to the Albanian border. Stromberg said the refugees were arriving in the Albanian town of Shkoder in poor condition after a nine-hour walk from the border. Montenegro's expulsion of refugees to Albania was unusual because Kosovo Albanians are — like Montenegrins — citizens of Yugoslavia. Montenegro said it had no choice because it could not afford to help the refugees. The U.N. refugee agency sent a letter Sunday to the president of Montenegro, Milo Djukanovic, reminding him of an earlier promise to provide refuge for those trying to escape fighting between Serb forces and the ethnic Albanian rebel Kosovo Liberation Army, which is seeking independence.

Segregationist governor Wallace dies

MONTGOMERY (AFP) — Former Alabama Governor George Wallace, who came to epitomise southern intolerance in the tumultuous 1960s for his fiery defence of racial segregation, died late Sunday of cardiac arrest. He was 79. Though he managed to flourish politically by adapting to the norms of a racially integrated South, Wallace never lived down the six words he uttered in 1963 at the beginning of his first term as governor: "Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever." No stranger to confrontational politics, Wallace made headlines across the country later the same year when, as promised, he stood "at the schoolhouse door" to block African-Americans from enrolling at the University of Alabama.

30 people massacred in Angola

LUANDA (AFP) — Thirty people, mostly diamond traffickers, were killed by armed men at the weekend in northeastern Angola, government radio said Monday. The radio blamed rebel troops loyal to UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi for the massacre Sunday in the mining town of Kamatuka, some 1,000 kilometres from Luanda, the report said. Angolan army troops have been sent to the small mining district, which the radio said lay in one of the two Lunda provinces on the border with Democratic Republic of Congo, to investigate and find the killers. Early in July, 215 people were reported massacred in the small mining region of Bula, which lies in territory which the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) long refused to hand over to central administration in line with 1994 peace accords. The U.N. mission in Angola, which sent an enquiry team, found nearly 100 bodies in eight mass graves. The Bula killing was also blamed on UNITA, which denied it.

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Shahab-e-Salaba.
The secretary general of the
National Union of the Friends of the
Muslims
They are mad dogs

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.
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Facsimile: Editorial: 5696183, Advertising: 5693337

E-mail: jotimes@go.com.jo

Web Site: <http://www.access2arabia.com/jordantimes/>

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays. Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times Advertising Department

Inheriting the gavel

MINISTER OF Information Nasser Judeh's recent proposal that the Jordan Press Association rather than the government deal with complaints against the press is certainly a positive initiative that should be taken up by the association. Judeh clearly stated Sunday that he preferred the association assume the prime responsibility for resolving any ethical or legal conflict arising from journalists' work. Obviously the minister wants to open a new page in the government's relation with the press by putting the moral responsibility for enforcing the law on journalists themselves. This will turn the association into an active body that will act as a monitor of press practices, an ombudsman and arbiter of disputes.

Parallel to this initiative, there is another important signal from the government of Prime Minister Faysal Tarawneh that suggests that it will not oppose parliamentary efforts to amend the Press and Publications Law. Should parliamentarians go ahead with their initiative to amend the law and the government cooperates positively, we could have a new law by early next year.

Until then the press association should assume its role by naming a panel of experts to monitor the press, issue a daily critique of press reports and distribute it among journalists. It should also, perhaps with the help of a U.N. body, identify areas in which journalists and editors need training and embark on a programme to update the skills of those professionals. In addition, the association should seek the advice of lawyers familiar with libel law to point out possible violations of the law in order to alert journalists to them.

Furthermore the association needs to update and improve its "code of ethics" document, after looking at other nations' experiences, and then make that document available to all journalists.

There is a great deal of constructive work that the association can assume, benefiting from the spirit of openness that the Regent ushered in and the government is advocating.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Raja Elissa asked how the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) could receive the American peace envoy Dennis Ross while streets are flooded with Palestinian blood. He asked how the PNA could continue negotiating while its unarmed people are being shot for venting their anger about the killing of the Awadallah brothers. Elissa said that people are wondering about the real role of Ross: Has he come to the region to push the peace process forward and convince the Israeli government to withdraw from the 13.1 per cent of the West Bank as stipulated by the American proposal? Or is his role to kill the peace process indefinitely? Elissa slammed the American administration for not criticising the Israeli murder of Imad and Amjad Awadallah, two prominent Hamas leaders. The writer also lashed out at Arab countries for their negative role in the region.

Al Dustour in its editorial criticised Israeli hard-line policy on the peace march. Israel wants to negotiate the American proposal, it said, already accepted by the Palestinians, pushing the American envoy, Dennis Ross, to come up with alternative suggestions that will severely harm the Palestinians and violate their rights. Israel wants to renegotiate the security memorandum that were part of the Oslo accords, which is already accepted by the current government, said the Arabic daily. The paper added that Israel does not harbour good intentions towards the peace, it is only interested in destroying the process. The Israeli policy of expanding settlements in the occupied areas and killing Hamas leaders, wherever they may be, is proof of this, added the paper.

View from the Fourth Circle

The Tarawneh government: Making wish-lists or history?

Rami G. Khouri

THE RECENT change in government in Jordan has become nearly an annual event, though the latest change of three weeks ago is potentially historically significant and deserves both support and honest public analysis. I say 'potentially' significant, because this situation is similar to that of the dozen government changes of the past decade: in an atmosphere of economic stress and public political scepticism, the Jordanian leadership has acted decisively and articulated fine goals that include transparency, stable democracy, accountability, and social justice.

My deep personal desire is that the promise of the new government will be translated into reality: but my journalistic tendency to analyse the world according to its realities, rather than its rhetoric, makes me cautious. His Majesty the King's letter designating Dr. Faysal Tarawneh as prime minister spells out an impressive array of goals and ideals that, if implemented, would make Jordan a model democracy and historic pioneer in the political modernisation of the Third World. These include an explicit commitment to work for "transparency and clarity... before the people... justice and imposing the law on the powerful, should they go astray... (eliminating) corruption, discrimination, favouritism, and nepotism... building a civic democratic society... and, constructive dialogue..."

King Hussein specifically said in his letter that "the time has come for us to transform slogans into actions and to transform our words and aspirations into action for the people to feel and see that these actions positively affect their daily life."

The prime minister, in turn, promised "to foster principles of freedom, democracy, justice and equality, and strengthen the systems of accountability and evaluation." He also pledged "transparency, fairness and objectivity" in government decision-making, and vowed to prevent shortcomings such as favouritism and unjustifi-

able discrimination.

This noble spirit has been reflected in the important meetings that His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan has held in recent weeks with the full spectrum of political forces in Jordan, including political parties, professional associations, opposition figures, and others. Other good signs are the government's new, more moderate tone on implementing the controversial press and publications law; the appointment of the enlightened Mr. Iyad Qatan as press and publications department director; and information minister Nasser Judeh's apparently more conciliatory approach to state-press relations. The reappointment to the Senate of outspoken former prime ministers Taher Masri and Ahmad Obeidat is also a constructive sign, perhaps signalling the political establishment's desire to reconfigure itself on a basis of inclusiveness and tolerance of dissent, without occasional bouts of irritation and exclusion.

These positive trends are countered, however, by some significant negatives. We have heard many previous calls for, and promises of, transparent, accountable, and democratic governance, usually with only partial fulfilment. His Majesty's explicit and perhaps even slightly exasperated statement that the time has come to translate slogans into action can be taken as a reminder of this fact.

The new government is composed of fine technocrats and virtuous individuals with a proven commitment to public service; but most of them have grown up and matured politically in an environment that did not include any significant accountability. It is not clear how and why they will suddenly achieve a qualitative leap in the democratic nature of our governance system. Technocracy is not the goal of the day; democracy, accountability, transparency and efficacy are the goals. To be achieved, they require a combination of political will at the top, qualified public servants, and a rigorous-

ly institutionalised system that promotes quality and honesty, demotes mediocrity, and punishes criminality. We have the leadership, political will, and qualified people in place; the institutionalised system remains the weak link. In Jordan and most of the Arab World today, this government will have to prove very quickly that it is prepared to implement such a system, rather than mainly talk about it.

The public remains sceptical of the new government's ability to achieve its noble goals. The latest University of Jordan Strategic Studies Centre opinion poll shows that only 44 per cent of the public (and just 26 per cent of opinion leaders) believe the prime minister will "very successfully" meet his stated mandate; interestingly, confidence in the government, as opposed to the prime minister himself, was even lower, with only 25 per cent of the public and 19 per cent of opinion leaders feeling the government will successfully achieve its goals.

It has become clear in the modern history of Jordan that qualitative change of this sort cannot be mandated only by directives from the top. Leadership, example and guidance from the monarchy must be combined with real changes in the exercise and checks-and-balance of power at two other levels: in political, economic, cultural, security, information, and other institutions of the state, and among the varied institutions of civil society, grassroots communities, and the private sector.

In view of the above positive and negative factors, this change of government will be historic only if it sparks serious changes in the real exercise of power at several levels of society. Faysal Tarawneh's government should not merely tell us that it will be democratic, transparent, honest, and accountable, as all previous governments have done. It must, rather, spell out a clear, practical plan of action that institutes credible mechanisms to achieve these fine goals, instead of merely offering them as a collective national wish-list once again.

A power vacuum

By David E. Sanger

WASHINGTON HAS been so distracted by President Bill Clinton's troubles, by the slow-motion collapse of the Russian government and by the continuing meltdown of Asia that few in the U.S. capital have had time to consider what could set off the next wave of economic turmoil.

So it was no accident that after a cabinet meeting late Thursday afternoon, Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin appeared on television to underscore, that the president is "intensely focused" on world economic events, even while he fights for political survival and apologises for what Mr. Rubin termed "terrible mistakes."

Mr. Rubin made an oblique argument that keeping the president in his job was essential, saying this is "a time when the world has only one leader who understands these issues."

This week, Washington and Wall Street, two universes rarely in sync, got a taste of what may be coming.

The images on Wednesday of Kenneth Starr's boxes of evidence landing on Capitol Hill helped propel the U.S. markets to another big slide Thursday, and the threat of impeachment proceedings against Mr. Clinton only adds to the sense that the United States is no longer a haven against instability.

At the same time, the Asian crisis was landing full-force in the Americas. The crisis in Brazil's stock market dissolved the few remaining hopes that Latin America would somehow stave off the economic contagion that began in the Pacific. Mexico's currency has declined to lows not seen since the 1995 peso crisis, reviving the fears of that first post-cold war dip into economic meltdown.

There is plenty of economic rationale behind the fear that a breach of the Latin wall could be far more devastating for U.S. companies than the twin crises in Asia and Russia.

U.S. exports to Latin America are far greater than to Asia, and U.S. banks are much more heavily exposed to a downturn there. But perhaps just as importantly, if economic turmoil engulfs the region, the contagion will be

exploding just over the United States' southern border.

"It's a very scary combination of events," said John Wadsworth Jr., the chairman of Morgan Stanley Asia. "The classical solutions to contain the Asian crisis failed. Meanwhile, we have a series of political vacuums at a moment when the complexity of the world's economic and financial situation requires real leadership."

"There's no world central bank, no world equivalent of Alan Greenspan, at a moment when our main problems around the globe are financial. That only magnifies the trouble."

The closest institution that fits that global role is the International Monetary Fund. Until now, the administration's bet was that the outbreak of new brush fires around the world would persuade Congress to put another \$18 billion into the cash-strapped IMF, rather than risk being accused of partisan wrangling while world economies melt.

The strategy, though, is clearly failing: On Thursday, a House of Representatives committee refused to approve a donation larger than \$3.4 billion. Mr. Clinton, distracted to say the least, is in no position to lobby for more funds. Though some compromise is possible, an aide to Mr. Rubin said the funds were "clearly in trouble."

It is always difficult to say what is frightening markets the most: the prospect of drawn-out impeachment hearings, or a recession in Latin America that would further hurt corporate profits or a general nervousness that a remarkable period of world prosperity is grinding to a halt.

But it would be a mistake to underestimate the impact of Clinton's troubles.

At moments of economic peril, what governments say, how quickly they react to plunging currencies or market crises, how fast they reassure investors that things are under control, take on new dimensions.

With the president viewed as crippled, at best, that leadership role falls almost entirely to Mr. Rubin and to Mr. Greenspan.

—The International Herald Tribune

The discrimination against Israeli Arabs

By Pascal B. Karmy

THE CASE of the Arab citizens of Israel has come lately to the fore of the minds of Israeli politicians. This problem of demography in the heart of Israel has been the subject of study and research by Israeli researchers in their universities and research centres.

The different researches have shown that Israel is a state of dual nationality in which the Palestinian Arabs form a substantial proportion — about one million — of the Israeli population. In spite of that, they are considered as second rate citizens and are discriminated against. Most Israeli laws give preference to the Jews rather than to the Arabs. An example is the Law of Return of 1950 which grants citizenship automatically to any Jew coming to Israel as soon as he arrives, but not to any Arab. Opportunities for work are good for the Jew but not for the Arab. The Arab citizens' lands have often been confiscated, but not land belonging to the Jew, and that is why the Arabs of Israel celebrate the Day of the Land every year after hundreds of dunums of Arab lands have been confiscated to the benefit of the state or to Jewish organisations or Jewish settlements.

One of the most unjust features of Israeli law, is that many Arab villages in Israel are not recognised by the Israeli authorities. They are thus deprived of many services of the state, and some are not helped by the state in any way. In

other words, as far as the state is concerned they are non-existent. As Dr. Israel Shahak, professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and chairman of the Israeli Human and Civil Rights League, has stated: "One can see many forms of discriminations against the Arabs of Israel with regard to the rights of man." He says: "We cannot divide justice: either the rights must be the same [and] applicable to all in the Middle East namely the right of an Arab to live and work and open business wherever he wishes in Israel; otherwise we will then justify discrimination against the Jews in Paris for example."

The state of Israel is better called the state of the Jews as the latter enjoy many more privileges than the Israeli Arabs. The majority of the land in Israel belongs to the state and is subject to the law which prohibits sale or transfer of the land to a non-Jew. Part of the land belongs also to the well-known Jewish Keren Kayemet and is inalienable to the non-Jew. On the other hand the majority of the land which belonged to the Arabs of Israel were confiscated if they absented themselves from their land or home, even though this absence was a result of the conflict of 1948 between the Arabs and Israel. Thus for example, the owners of the lands of Irit and Biram villages were not allowed to return to their villages and live there on the ground that they were considered "absentees" under the unjust Absentee Property Law of 1950 although the inhabitants of those two villages

did not leave Israel. In sum, no Arab of Israeli citizenship may purchase, occupy or lease land from any Jew or from the Israeli authorities.

One can also explain the fact that, because of racism and discrimination, in 1980 only a few Arab senior officials are listed in the Israeli Yearbook, although Israeli Arabs represented that year 17 per cent of the population of Israel.

In the field of education, discrimination against the Arabs of Israel is exemplified by the publication of a new three volume series called "On the Good Land" written for elementary government religious schools by the Department of Israeli Ministry of Education which states inter alia "Jew and Arab sitting under one tree as a symbol of peace between them is a utopia of Zionism's creation. The Arabs have no roots in the Land of Israel. They did not plant any trees here, and therefore they will not eat the fruit of those trees. If they are sitting under trees, these trees do not belong to them. The connection of Arabs to the land is a material one, while the relation of the Jew to the land is historical and religious."

With the intention of obliterating Palestinian history and culture, the history of Palestine is not taught in Israeli schools. Professor Israel Shahak says in his book "Le Racisme de l'Etat d'Israel" on page 236, that in schools no mention is made of the history of Palestine during the two thousand years of the diaspora, neither in books, nor in lectures. Not only is the histo-

ry of Palestine not taught in Jewish schools, it is almost not allowed to be taught in Arab schools within Israel. After the 1967 occupation Israel sought to impose its syllabus on the inhabitants of East Jerusalem. However, in consequence of strong opposition against this initiative, Israel was compelled to allow the Jordanian syllabus to be taught in the schools, but only if expurgated of all reference to Palestine or its people.

Sami Khalil Mar'i a Palestinian education officer who taught in Israel says in his book "Education, culture and identity among Palestinians in Israel" published in 1984: "In short, Israeli education and cultural policies for Arabs aimed at nothing less than the de-Palestinianisation and de-nationalisation of those Arabs under its control since 1948. Education of Arabs in Israel has been perceived and used as an instrument of ideology through which the Zionist entity can, so it had hoped, achieve the goal of annihilation of Palestinian cultural and national identity. The modern history of Palestine is distorted and reduced to the "history of the land of the fathers" of the desert which was transformed into paradise by Zionist settlers and newcomers."

The writer was an advocate in Palestine in 1944 and, for many years, legal officer at UNRWA headquarters in Beirut and Vienna. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

Missile with a message

By Donald MacIntyre

SAY THIS much for North Korea's quirky leader, Kim Jong Il: he knows how to get the world's attention. Early last week, a powerful new missile lifted off from a secret base on North Korea's eastern coast and streaked toward Japan. Dumping its first stage off the western coast of Japan, the rocket sped high over the country and plunged down into the Pacific Ocean. But it packed a political wallop that resounded in capitals from Tokyo to Washington. The message: North Korea may be broke and short of food, but the Stalinist state has a dangerous new toy.

Why fire the missile now? The launch

undoubtedly impressed potential weapon buyers. Missile sales are Pyongyang's biggest source of foreign exchange, peaking at about \$700 million a year in the late 1980s, according to South Korea analysts. But revenue has declined to about \$50 million as Pyongyang's clients have found other suppliers. With its economy imploding, the country desperately needs hard currency. "What they are doing is demonstrating a new product," says a senior administration official.

North Korea's leaders probably calculated the launch would also thrill audiences at home, to set the stage for this week's celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of the founding of North Korea by Kim's father, Kim Il Sung. Last week the North Korean parliament, meeting for the first time since Kim Il Sung died in 1994, honoured him with the title of permanent president (enhancing the truth of the slogan the great leader is always with us). Kim Jong Il doesn't need the title of president. He has used his authority as commander in chief and head of the ruling Workers' Party to run the country. Last week, he was awarded the power to declare war, sign peace treaties and control the defence industry, underscoring both his control and the growing role of the armed forces. Meanwhile, the meet-and-greet functions he so dislikes have been palmed off to the chairman of the presidium. Marking the milestone with a nifty new missile could be a way to distract a country on its knees: Famine has killed an estimated 2 million people in North Korea since 1995.

The U.S., however, was also a prime target audience. The launch came just hours before diplomats from both countries were due to sit down in New York City to iron out a mini-crisis that erupted over the North's nuclear ambitions. U.S. spy satellites revealed a massive excavation north-east of Pyongyang that suggested the North could be attempting to revive a nuclear weapons project they had agreed to shelve. It's still not clear what is going on at the dig. Some analysts guess that the project is a kind of bluff, an attempt to leverage the impoverished regime's only real bargaining chip: its ability to threaten its neighbours. Unveiling a new missile would fit nicely with that strategy. "This may be a way of poking us and saying, 'pay attention to North Korea. We can still be a pain in the neck,'" says Joel Wit, a senior associate at the Henry L. Stimson Centre, a Washington-based public policy think tank. The delayed negotiations resumed Saturday in New York, and State Department officials reported progress in the talks. They will brief the White House this week.

North Korea clearly doesn't think the U.S. has been taking it seriously enough of late. Pyongyang agreed to shut down its nuclear facilities in 1994 in exchange for two new reactors that don't produce bomb fuel and a yearly gift of 500,000 tonnes of heavy fuel oil for conventional power plants. Washington also agreed to roll back sanctions. The hard-won deal brought both sides back from the brink of war. But Pyongyang is frustrated over what it sees as foot dragging in Washington. The reactors are behind

schedule, and so are the oil deliveries.

Pyongyang may have a point. The administration, U.S. critics complain, has moved on to crises in other parts of the globe, putting the 1994 agreement on auto-pilot. What's more, the White House under-estimated how much money it needed from Congress to pay for the oil, which costs about \$55 million annually. This year it asked for only \$35 million, hoping to pass the tin cup among its allies. That hasn't worked, since many countries question why the world's leading economic power can't come up with the money. But U.S. lawmakers are even more reluctant to bankroll Pyongyang after Monday's launch. The Senate quickly passed legislation requiring President Clinton to certify that North Korea is not developing nuclear weapons or exporting ballistic missiles to terrorist nations before providing more fuel oil. If approved by the House, the requirement could kill the 1994 agreement.

Still, the Taepo Dong-I should help to refocus the thinking of policy makers in Washington. It is light-years ahead of its predecessor, the Nodong-I, a one-stage rocket with a range of up to 1,000 kilometres. Multiple-stage vehicles require expertise in guidance systems and other tricky technology. Thus last week's launch means the North is a step closer to building intercontinental ballistic missiles that could reach the mainland U.S., according to Richard Speier, a Carnegie Foundation consultant and former missile proliferation expert at the Pentagon.

What can the U.S. do? Certainly a "surgical" strike with cruise missiles à la Sudan and Afghanistan is out of the question. Seoul, the capital of South Korea, is 138 miles from Pyongyang, and the North has enough artillery to flatten it before a war even got into full swing. The U.S. is looking at antimissile defences for more distant potential targets, but they are costly and nowhere near deployment. The so-called Theatre High Altitude Area Defence missile programme — billed as an improvement on the existing Patriot system — has been plagued with troubles. But pressure to pour money into such systems could grow as North Korea and other hostile states roll out increasingly sophisticated weapon systems.

At week's end, military analysts were investigating claims by North Korea that it had put a satellite into orbit with last week's launch. The North Koreans say the satellite is for the peaceful exploration of outer space, but it also will beam tunes back to earth, including The Song of Marshal General Kim Jong Il. So far, listening stations haven't picked up any signals. But if Kim has spent millions on a song-singing satellite while his country is starving, he will retain his position as one of the most bizarre leaders in the world.

With reporting by CNN's Mike Chinoy/Pyongyang, Stella Kim, Seoul, Mark Thompson and Douglas Waller/Washington.

— Time

Environment

Tearing up the map of creation

A fish the size of a barn door is facing extinction. But if we failed to notice this until it was almost too late, how many other species are disappearing? What we do know, says Tim Radford, is that the mass extinction of species at current rates has baleful consequences for Planet Earth — and humanity.

A BIG FISH is about to swim away — for ever. The barn-door skate Raja levis seems close to extinction. In 1951 research ships found it in 10 per cent of all trawls of the St. Pierre Bank in the Atlantic ocean off Newfoundland. Over the past 20 years, none have been caught there. The barn-door skate grows to a metre across, not something you would miss if you were looking out for it. But nobody was. "Failure to examine historical data has resulted in the largest skate in the North Atlantic being driven to near extinction without anyone noticing," say researchers. If something the size of a barn door could slip away without being missed "the fate of little known species is likely to be worse."

The things that make life possible are barely visible. Laboratory experiments based on small, artificial worlds keep demonstrating that diversity is life's strongest card. The recycling of air and water and plant nutrients is the business of little creatures most of us never notice. The food we eat, the medicines we take and the tools we use have been fashioned for us by 500 million years of evolution. Yet we know practically nothing about most of them. We even lack a starting point. Who knows how many small fry are being ditched?

Creatures are being erased from life's register faster than anyone can record them. All the evidence is that humans are extinguishing other life forms on an epic scale. But there are no tallymen to count the dead, or take the measure of the living. There are probably only about 7,000 experts — they are called taxonomists, or sometimes systematists — on the whole planet with the authority to distinguish one species from another. Most are in the wrong places. And few have been getting much encouragement. Without them we cannot even begin arguing.

It was not until 1758 that Carl Linnaeus, the great Swedish taxonomist, began counting the animal kingdom. French and British natural historians followed, and established a systematic way of interrogating a creature's nature in order to make a family connection. In the course of

240 years, they established a local habitation and name for each of about 1.7 or 1.8 million species.

But there is no central catalogue or inventory. So the same species might be recorded under one identity in one country and under an entirely separate name in another. Where scientists have checked, they have found "synonymy" in perhaps 20 per cent of cases. So the true number of species that have been described and named is perhaps 1.4 million.

Then researchers began to look a little harder. They spread nets under trees, dusted them with insecticide and counted just the arthropods (including insects) that fell out. The numbers astonished them. When they got to 50,000, they started to get alarmed. By that reckoning there might be 20 million species to be described, rather than 2 million. What was true for the Amazon rainforest turned out to be equally true for coral reefs and mangrove swamps.

But taxonomists are oppressed by something darker than the task of counting. What is going on now is described, quite calmly, as "the sixth great extinction." The fossil record is a pattern of evolution and extinction, with species continuously evolving, flourishing and expiring as naturally as individuals are born, develop and die. Imposed on this hubbub of appearance and disappearance is a series of dramatic happenings, followed by new beginnings, at least five times in the past 500 million years.

The last of these was 65 million years ago, when a 10 kilometre asteroid whacked into the Yucatan in Mexico. The change now is less dramatic but no less significant. According to some theorists, half of all the creatures with which humans share the planet could be about to steal away into the eternal night, simply because their homes are being destroyed. By humans. The world's dwindling tropical forests could be losing creatures at the rate of 27,000 a year — three creatures an hour — at the most conservative estimate.

The precision of these figures is disputed, but the truth behind them is not. During the past century birds and mammals have been disappearing at an average rate of one a year. This is already a thousand times faster than the "background" rate of extinction. It is confirmed by crude counts made by the conservation groups: A tenth of all flowering plants are about to disappear, a tenth of all birds

on the planet are seriously endangered, many of the big mammal groups — the cats, in particular — could be about to disappear. But 99 per cent of creation is less than 3mm long. Most of the smaller species will be gone before scientists find out they were there.

So taxonomy's high command decided to stake out small areas of forest or savannah and simply sample the local life, quick headcounts of this and that species. Such a British project in the Cameroon came to an abrupt end only last year. Scientists had marked out a few hectares of already well-studied forest and had begun to catalogue all the creatures in just a limited selection of groups. They gave up. There were simply too many species to count.

"We could have carried on, but we would have needed many more taxonomists and systematists," says John Lawton, of London's Imperial College and president of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

There's the rub. "The global workforce, considered to number 7,000 systematists, is clearly inadequate," says Stephen Blackmore, keeper of botany at the Natural History Museum in London. Work by taxonomists involves travel by faraway places on budgets that simply don't stretch very far.

Biodiversity is a matter of naked human self-interest. Human economy rests on plants. Crops and their wild relatives have to be understood and conserved, and that means the insects that prey on them must also be understood. Plants that provide most medicines — from aspirin for headaches to taxol for breast cancer — have developed the chemicals they possess as a response to their co-evolution with insects. There could be billions of dollars of useful, valuable, exploitable knowledge to be gained from almost unknown creatures in their habitats.

Last year Cornell scientists calculated that if humans had to pay for the services they received free from nature — pollination, water purification, crop pest control, that sort of thing — the bill would be \$2.9 million annually. Fellow creatures are a kind of map of creation.

Just knowing how many species there are is like having proper maps of the stars," says John Lawton. "It's exactly the same for a proper science of ecology and evolution and many areas of biology. We need to know how many organisms there are, what they are, and where they are."

— Guardian

Far from humans, the right whale thrives

By Anthony Faiola

DEEP IN wintertime Patagonia, the gulfs of this enclaved peninsula are the breeding grounds of the right whale, the rarest kind on Earth.

Only right now, they suddenly do not seem so rare. In numbers not seen in half a century, randy males are heeding the call of the wild, romancing enormous females. Just for the fun of it, dozens of dark, burly beasts are leaping and twirling from the water like ballerinas who weigh 50 metric tonnes.

It is a scene that has scientists worldwide both excited and slightly mystified. Indeed, for the first time since their contact with humankind, things here are finally going right for the endangered right whale — so dubbed, experts say, because early whalers considered them the "right" whale to hunt. They are one of the few whales that float, rather than sink, after being harpooned, making them the easiest targets for whalers before more sophisticated techniques expanded hunting to other species.

At the turn of the century, there were an estimated 60,000 right whales worldwide, but since the animals — which measure 17 metres or more — were prized for having the thickest blubber of the big whales, they were targeted by whalers. Even after right whale hunting was banned in 1937, they were poached mercilessly. Russian and Ukrainian fleets illegally harvested at least 2,000 off the coast of South America in the 1960s alone. The killings brought both the northern and southern species of right whale to near extinction: in the early 1970s there was an estimated world population of only 4,000. Today, there are an estimated 7,000 whales.

Now, scientists are calling what is happening here one of the most important recoveries of a whale species this century. The number of southern right whales here has ballooned to about 2,500 from 360 in 1971, and they are reproducing at the extraordinary growth rate of about seven per cent a year. The bays along the coast here now harbour almost half of the world's whale population.

Compare that with the currently recorded number of 300 northern right whales, which range off the coast of the United States from Maine to Florida. Their population, up from 250 about 10

years ago, is far more unstable and genetically weak, edging up about two per cent a year and enduring a far greater rate of infant mortality, whale experts say. Although scientists are still at a loss to define the vast difference in growth rates, they are leaning towards the most obvious answer: Right whales here are confronted with less man-made pollution and commerce than their northern cousins. Put simply, if you leave them alone, they will thrive.

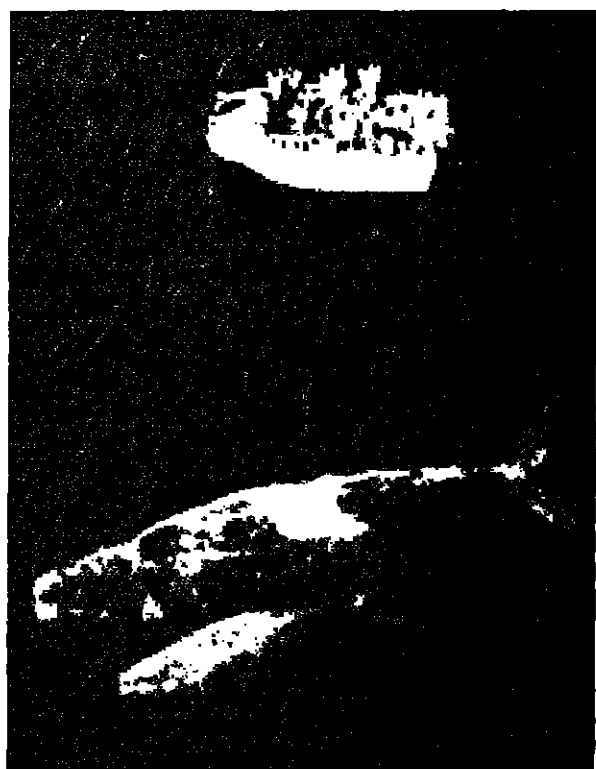
"I think you could call what's happening in Argentina a case study on how to bring a species of whale back from the edge of extinction," said Roger Payne, a leading American whale expert who founded a field station here in 1971 to study southern right whales. "Take the negative human effect out of the equation and you've got great chances for success."

Southern right whales live in seas far less-travelled by commercial shipping vessels than their northern cousins, who are of the same genus but are a distinct species bearing slightly different markings. Almost 60 per cent of northern right whales bear scars, some deep enough to eventually kill them from run-ins with large ships.

No similar statistics are available for southern right whales, but scientists say scarring is far less prevalent in the population here because of less intensive commercial shipping. Patagonia is sparsely populated, with 2.7 people per square kilometre, and has no large ports or population centres such as New York, Boston or Washington-Baltimore. That also means less pressure from pollution in the waters, which scientists believe is

causing serious problems for the northern whales, especially their young.

Despite mounting commercial fishing in the waters off Argentina's continental shelf, the whales also have found a friend in the Argentinians. Argentinians took a leading role in banning commercial whaling in the 1980s, though poachers — in particular the Japanese, Norwegians and Russians — continue to harvest dozens of whales.



The Argentinians quickly learned that protecting whales was mutually beneficial. Here in wind-swept coastal Patagonia, a semi-arid, often-frigid region dotted with desert shrub and inhabited by guanacos (oversized llamas), sea lions, sea elephants and penguins, whale watching has helped make tourism a huge industry.

To maintain the industry and the whales, the Argentinians designated the Gulf of San Jose, one of the whales' most important breeding grounds on Peninsula Valdes, a whale reserve, which is strictly monitored. The waters here are ideal for breeding, scientists say. The whales are attracted to the narrow inlets 4.5 to 9 metres deep, thought to be perfect for

nursing newborn calves.

The whales themselves are considered "living national monuments," the highest level of protection afforded to animals in Argentina. Strict population and zoning limits have been set on the number of people allowed to live in towns here, and the number of whale-watching boats and customers are limited by regulation. A master plan being developed for the coastal region of Patagonia is considering even stricter development rules.

But there are signs that humans here, too, are having a negative impact. Some nations, such as South Africa, have put laws into effect that limit whale-watching to boats without engines. Argentina permits power boats, but some skippers do not always obey regulations to cut their engines within 100 metres of the animals.

Also, population growth on this peninsula and the increase in commercial fisheries have created another problem. Though the whales come here only to mate, the onshore fisheries have lured thousands of sea gulls that gouge the skin of the whales' backs.

"The whales hate it," said Victoria Rowntree, director of the Right Whale Programme of the Whale Conservation Institute. "It's obvious. When they're bitten, they turn around and dive to avoid the gulls," he said, which "especially go after the babies. Sometimes, the gashes are very deep."

The whales migrate to Patagonia to breed after spending months building up their fat feeding in the colder waters near Antarctica. In the past, they were noted only in September and October, but now they are abundant from June through December. No one knows exactly why. It could be that people just notice them more. But others have postulated that higher water temperatures from global warming have changed their mating habits.

"We'll continue trying to find the key," Mariano Coscarella, a marine biologist with the National Patagonian Centre, said. "But right now, I just want to enjoy it. I live across from the beach, and in the mornings, I'm woken up by the sound of whales breathing in the gulf. What can I say? It is the most beautiful sound I've heard in my life."

— International Herald Tribune

Dutch cyclists blown away by tunnel

By Karen Iley
Reuters

IMAGINE BEING blasted through a tunnel at speeds of almost 50 km an hour by a wind machine while perched on a bike.

It may sound like a white-knuckle fairground ride, but for the cycle-mad, eco-friendly, try-anything-once Dutch, it's just a potential alternative to catching the bus.

Cycling is a way of life for people in the Netherlands. Around 80 per cent of the country's 15 million people own a bike, cycling a combined total of 13.5 billion km a year.

Weather puts the dampers on seasonal biking while biking is a quick, efficient and pleasant means of transport during the warm summer months, come the autumn, the miserable Dutch weather can force cyclists to seek alternative means of transport.

But one southern Dutch council is attempting to protect its cyclists from the elements and ensure a more environmentally friendly transport system. It is making tentative plans to construct a eight kilometre tunnel.

"We want to build a bike route about five miles long between Helmond and Eindhoven and use some new methods to make it more pleasant for cyclists,"

said Paul Kloet, civil engineer at Helmond Municipal Council.

One option the council is considering is the construction of a wind-assisted tunnel which blows cyclists along at speeds of up to 50 kph.

This is the brain-child of U.S. company, Bicycle Transportation Systems Inc.

Keen to try out its "interstate highway transportation corridor," the obvious place to start is the Netherlands, says company president, Milnor Senior.

The tunnel, known as the TransGlide 2000, is around 7-1/2 metres wide and almost four metres tall at the highest point.

A dividing wall separates bicycle traffic moving in opposite directions, while fans-powered by electric motors propel cyclists through the tunnel.

"Bicyclists will be able to ride 10 kilometres inside the system for the same amount of energy they would use to ride one kilometre outside," says the firm on its Internet site.

Emergency stops and impromptu U-turns but what happens if a cyclist decides to turn back? No problem, says Senior.

"We will have exits. Our recommendation is that an exit be built at a minimum of one exit and entrance point every mile. So if you need to turn around you could take an exit, cross over to an entrance and get back into the system," he told Reuters.

And what about the cost? "Our strategy is to use materials from where the system is constructed through local suppliers. I can build it in the United States for around \$8.0 million per mile, but that cost would go down outside the United States," Senior said.

Price aside, both Helmond council and the Dutch cyclists union welcome the idea.

"This tunnel idea is one of the solutions to help us do something about the weather situation here in the Netherlands."

"Often the rain is too hard or the wind blows too fast," Kloet said.

The cycling union ENFB is quite keen — in certain areas.

"It would be useful when you have to cross highways and rivers. Then it would be good to have the wind on your back," said spokesman Otto van Boggelen.

"But the pleasure of cycling is to experience nature, hear the birds and feel the real wind in your hair. The tunnel would take away some of the fun. But by the same token if your shortest route from the suburbs to the city is parallel to a highway then that's not much fun either — that's when a wind tunnel would be ideal," he added.

Helmond Municipal Council is still studying the details of the idea, said Kloet.

Israeli ban on labourers costing \$2m a day — Palestinians

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Palestinian officials protested Monday that a ban imposed last week on Palestinians entering Israel from the West Bank and Gaza Strip was costing \$2 million per day in lost wages.

Israel imposed the restrictions Thursday to prevent threatened reprisal attacks following the killing by Israeli forces of two senior members of the Islamic Resistance Movement in the West Bank.

"This closure is blackmail, we are losing \$2 million a day," said Shaher Said, general secretary of the federation of Palestinian trade unions.

Said noted that Israel had eased the clampdown Sunday to permit shipments of merchandise between Israel and the Palestinian territories, but said 90 per cent of the goods traded were Israeli items sold to the Palestinians.

"Israel is an occupation force and they are obliged to find jobs for these workers," Said complained, adding that his group had asked international trade union bodies to pressure Israel to lift the sanction.

Israeli officials said the closure prevented around 100,000 Palestinian workers from reaching day jobs inside Israel. Another 21,000 Palestinian merchants who have permits to enter Israel for their business

were also affected, said Shlomo Dror, spokesman for the coordinator of Israeli activities in the occupied territories.

Some Israeli officials said the closure would last through a string of Jewish holidays which begin with Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, on Sunday and last until mid-October.

But Dror said he believed it would be only a matter of days before the workers can come back.

He said Palestinian areas were quiet Monday following several days of violent protests over the killings Thursday of Adel and Imad Awadallah, two brothers who were top figures in the Hamas military wing in the West Bank.

The pair were shot by Israeli special forces who raided their hideout in a farmhouse near Hebron.

"The streets look calm and we are pressing for an easing of the closure," Dror said.

Israeli and Palestinian officials met late Sunday and agreed to lift the closure for merchandise trade as of Monday, said Selim Abu Safiyeh, a Palestinian Authority official.

Israel last imposed a full closure on the territories in September 1997 following a spate of suicide bombings in occupied Jerusalem.

That clampdown lasted 24 days and caused serious economic difficulties in the territories.

Israel has granted permits to 60,000 Palestinian labourers to work in Israel, although Dror said another 40,000 were believed to enter the country each day illegally to work.

Earlier this year Israel issued special permits to around 30,000 labourers who were given clearance to enter the country even during security closures in a bid to ease the economic burden of such sanctions.

But Dror said even these workers were being denied entry because of fears militants could slip in among them to carry out attacks.

Meanwhile, Palestinian officials blasted Israel on Monday, saying its punitive security procedures had cost the Palestinian economy dearly and driven it into recession.

"Steps taken by Israel against the Palestinian economy have led to a recession for several months, an increase in unemployment and a budget deficit in the Palestinian Authority," said Mohammad Shbhatyeh, director of the Palestinian Council for Development and Reconstruction.

Revenue in the Palestinian Authority has covered only 46 per cent of expenses this year, a shortfall caused primarily by the closing off of Palestinian territories and restrictions on the free movement of goods and people between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, he said.

Palestinian unemployment has soared to between 20 and 30 per cent, according to U.N. estimates.

Shbhatyeh's remarks came after a meeting with representatives of donor nations that in 1994 pledged more than \$2 billion to help launch the fledgling Palestinian Authority's economy.

He said representatives were briefed on the pending three-year Palestinian plan for economic and social development, which is due to be presented officially at the end of the year.

The World Bank, the European Union, the United States, Japan and Norway reproached the Palestinian Authority in August over its inability to plan the spending of the hundreds of millions of dollars it receives in aid each year.

In a joint letter they said that Nabil Shaath, head of the Palestinian Ministry of Planning, had no "clear idea of his needs" and stressed the Palestinian Authority needed to "prove its ability to handle major (foreign) investments."

Shbhatyeh said Monday that the Palestinians have asked donor countries to give still more in the next few years but that "no decision has yet been made."

Industrial world must unite to spur growth — Clinton

NEW YORK (AFP) — President Bill Clinton Monday appealed to world leaders on ways to salvage world financial structures, Clinton said.

"In the face of this challenge, America can and must continue to act and to lead, to take the urgent steps needed today to calm the financial crisis, restart the engine of growth in Asia and minimise the impact of financial turmoil on other nations," he insisted.

He reiterated a direct appeal to Japan to boost domestic demand, reform its troubled banking system and further deregulate its economy.

"It is difficult to see how any actions of the world community can be successful in restoring growth in Asia in the absence of the restoration of growth in Japan," Clinton told the council, a private research group.

He warned that economic paralysis and pronounced income inequalities in Russia "could have an impact on our cooperation (with Moscow) on nuclear disarmament, on fighting terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction."

Clinton pressed the new Russian leadership to reaffirm its commitment to democracy and free markets and to take steps to restore investor confidence.

"No nation, rich or poor, democratic or authoritarian, can escape the fundamental economic imperatives of the global market."

"No nation can escape its discipline. No nation can avoid its responsibility to do its part."

Closer to home, the president sought to turn up the heat on Congress, which has yet to give full approval to his request for an additional \$18 billion for the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

"Every day we don't act, we undermine the confidence the world badly needs and that we are trying to restore."

"Congress must simply assume its responsibility for our leadership in the economy," Clinton's six-point approach to overcoming worldwide economic stagnation comprised the following:

- U.S., Japanese, European efforts to spur growth,
- easing the debt burden on crippled Asian companies,
- doubling World Bank support for "social safety nets" in Asia,
- use of \$15 billion in IMF emergency funds to prevent the crisis from spreading to Latin America,
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REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates Prices as at 14/09/98 17:52

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.7027	0.5966	1.4032	133.07	1.5161	1681.80	1.9204	5.7110
DE Mark	0.5873	-	0.3801	0.8243	78.22	0.6896	967.38	1.1279	3.3637
GB Sterling	1.6763	2.6656	-	2.3640	223.33	2.6398	2820.55	3.2207	9.5779
CH Franc	0.7127	121.23	0.4243	-	94.82	1.0784	1197.35	136.72	4.0689
JP Yen	0.0076	1.2783	0.4477	1.0541	-	1.1377	12.63	144.18	4.2840
CA Dollar	0.6800	1.2916	0.4225	1.0566	1.14	-	1270.80	1.4581	4.3265
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0122	0.3545	0.8635	1265.02	0.9008	-	11.42	3.3918
NL Guilder	0.5207	88.82	0.3104	73.09	69.27	0.7887	576.48	-	2.9700
FR Franc	0.1751	0.2861	0.1044	24.5742	23.29	0.2652	33.62	33.6200	-

Mid-East Currencies

Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7090	3.7506	0.3770	3.6402	0.3038	3.6728	1617.28	3.4910
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	-	5.2900	0.5317	5.1343	0.4285	5.1803	2139.99	4.7969
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1890	-	0.1005	0.97	0.0810	0.98	404.64	0.9068
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8807	9.9491	-	9.66	0.8069	9.74	4024.75	0.0217
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0303	1.0303	-	0.0835	1.01	416.80	0.9343
Kuwait Dinar	3.2916	2.3338	12.3466	1.2409	11.98	-	12.09	4994.24	0.9343
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0212	1.0226	0.9911	0.0827	-	413.10	0.9260
Lebanese/1000	0.66	0.4673	2.4720	0.2485	2.3992	0.2002	2.4207	-	2.2416
Egyptian	0.2940	0.2085	1.1028	0.1108	1.0703	0.0893	1.0799	445.12	-

Energy

Oil	Last	Revised
Brent	0.00	0.00
W. Texas	14.60	14.36
Bonny	0.00	0.00
Dubai	13.01	12.90
UL Gas	128.00	128.00

Mid-East Currencies

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4541	0.18906	0.37442	38.5063
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.46367	0.18242	0.38235	38.2882
KW Dinar	3.2916	5.80538	1.96348	4.62321	438.404
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.51671	1.58253	3.72578	383.332
CY Pound	1.9808	3.373	1.1811	2.7797	253.612

Libor Fixing

Period	-1	-3	-6	-12
Cncy	Month	Months	Months	Years
USD	5.6820	5.6000	5.4063	5.2800
GBP	7.4375	7.4375	7.3125	7.1280
JPY	0.4414	0.4297	0.4766	0.4806
DEM	3.4688	3.4688	3.3313	3.5313
FRF	1.5000	1.5508	1.5602	1.7305
CHF	3.6000	3.6313	3.6391	3.5703
ITL	5.2170	5.0480	4.5130	-

Main Equity Indices

Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Cls
New York	DOW JONES	7944.32	148.82	1.91	7957.23	7796.83	7795.5
New York	S&P 500	1028.79	19.73	1.96	1031.11	1009.06	1009.06
London	FT-SE 100	5227.4	106.8	2.13	5239.9	5122	5118.5
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	14227.37	310.29	2.23	14329.9	13844.3	13917
Paris	CAC 40	3707.58	129.24	3.61	3726.01	3636.91	3578.34
Frankfurt	DAX	4896.49	169.34	3.36	4916.43	4834.12	4737.15

Energy

Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lb)	106.17	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	2008	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	223	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	100	Spot
Soy (c/lb)	24.56	Spot
Tea (stg/kg)	125	Spot
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	415	Spot

* JOD Cross Rates

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1856	1.1914
DE Mark	0.4169	0.419
CH Franc	0.8067	0.8082
FR Franc	0.1244	0.125
JP Yen	0.5382	0.5409
NL Guilder	0.3897	0.3715
IT Lira	0.4221	0.4242

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.



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Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Agricultural Credit Corporation envisages lending to rise by JD15m over five years

**** THE AGRICULTURAL Credit Corporation (ACC)** has extended about JD16.8 million in loans to 6,707 farmers last year, the corporation said in its 1997 annual report. The loans, extended by the ACC's twenty branches spread in the various governorates, financed the establishment or reclamation of 6,174 agricultural projects.

In an introductory address, ACC Director General Nimer Nabulsi said the corporation seeks to expand geographically in order to simplify its financing services to all farmers and to explore development possibilities.

Nabulsi indicated that the outstanding balance of credits stood at JD87 million at the end of 1997. The corporation's total assets amounted to JD96.1 million at the end of last year compared to JD92.7 million at the end of 1996. The ACC expects the (1998-2002) five-year lending plan to total around JD105 million. Financing is forecast to be JD17 million in 1998 and JD18 million in 1999. Starting the year 2000 and further on the lending is expected to be JD21 million. JD23 million in 2001 and JD26 million in the year 2002.

Collection of debt during the five-year period is estimated at JD125 million spread over 1998, 1999 and beyond as follows: JD21 million, JD23 million, JD25 million (year 2000), JD27 million (2001) and JD29 million in the year 2002.

Meanwhile, the corporation has prepared a draft law in line with the government plan to transform the ACC into an agricultural bank. The draft

law is currently being reviewed at higher levels before a suitable decision is taken by the Council of Ministers. Furthermore, the government has approved in principle giving the corporation administrative independence to enable it to operate with better efficiency and flexibility. The ACC already enjoys full financial independence.

According to the annual report, the restructuring of the corporation will include increasing the capital to JD50 million and developing the bases of agricultural lending. Most importantly amendments will be related to decentralisation in extending loans and delegation of authority.

Another restructuring step will be in reconsidering the interest rate structure as the ACC's real interest rate structure at present is negative. "It would be difficult to bring in sudden core changes on interest rates but that can be done gradually in accordance with a specific timetable," the report said stressing that the situation of small farmers and the general situation of the farming sector will be taken into consideration.

Nevertheless, the ACC attributed higher income from interest rates for an increase in total earnings which amounted to JD5,356,945 in 1997. By taking into account JD3,195,701 in total expenditures, the corporation ended last year with a net income of JD2,161,244 (Al Aswaq).

Airports earn almost half of revenues from non-aeronautical business

GENEVA (AFP) — Airports globally earn almost half of their revenues from unrelated activities such as parking and hotels, the Airports Council International (ACI) has said.

The information was culled from a survey among almost one third of ACI's 1250 member

airports and accounts for some 70 per cent of the global passenger traffic handled in 1996. The breakdown for aeronautical and non-aeronautical revenues for North American, European and Asian airports is similar, the ACI said.

Airports in these regions earn around 56

per cent of their revenue from activities such as landing, aircraft parking, lighting and airbridge charges and 46 per cent from outside businesses including also retail concessions and rental cars.

Major variations are found in the Pacific and Latin America/Caribbean regions, where non-

aeronautical services account for 51 and 57 of all revenues, the ACI said. European airports have the highest revenue per passenger, averaging \$18.15, while in North America the corresponding figure is just \$6.61.

"This reflects higher per passenger expendi-

tures on retail goods (including duty free) and higher airport charges," it added. The ACI consists of 510 international airports and airport authorities at 1,250 airports in more than 160 countries.

U.S. workers long for good old days — poll

HOUSTON (R) — U.S. workers long for the good old days when they went to work for one company and stayed with it, according to a poll released by Shell Oil Co.

The first-ever "Shell Poll" found that the new era when employees change jobs more often

and companies are constantly trimming their workforce had created greater insecurity among workers. Seventy-two per cent of the 1,123 randomly selected adults said they preferred "the security of staying with one employer for a long time and

moving up the ladder," according to the poll, which was conducted for Shell by Peter D. Hart Research Associates. Only 25 per cent said companies are "very to fairly loyal" to employees.

Aside from security, workers' biggest beef is

with their pay. When asked to name their top dissatisfaction on the job, 36 per cent cited meagre salaries, followed by 23 per cent who complained about advancement opportunities.

On the other hand, 66 per cent of those polled said they would continue

working even if they won the lottery. The survey consisted of telephone interviews conducted July 17-20 by the Hart research firm. It had a margin of error of plus-or-minus three per cent.

Clinton
emergency funds in
at the crisis from
ding to Latin America
increased activity in
U.S. Export-Import
to support projects in
opening countries.
Congressional approval
ne additional \$18 bn.
for the IMF.

14/09/98 17:52	FTSE	NIG	JPY
181.80	1.9204	6.7110	
97.38	1.1279	3.3621	
20.65	3.2207	9.5779	
97.35	138.72	4.9680	
12.83	144.18	4.3260	
70.80	1.4551	3.2810	
75.48	11.42	2.9700	
32.62	33.6200		

AED	LBP	EGP
1.8728	1517.25	3.4010
1.1803	2139.99	4.7900
0.98	404.84	0.9080
9.74	4024.75	9.0210
1.01	416.80	0.9340
12.09	4994.24	0.9340
1.4207	413.10	0.9320
1.0795	445.12	2.2410

GBP	CHF	JPY
1.16906	0.37442	35.5000
1.16242	0.36255	36.2500
1.98348	4.62231	438.4000
1.58253	3.72578	353.2200
1.1811	2.7797	283.8100

High	Low	P/C
7967.23	7795.55	7795.55
1031.11	1009.06	1009.06
5239.9	5122	5118.4
14329.9	13944.3	13917
3726.01	3638.91	3673.34
4916.43	4834.12	4737.53

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5239.9	5122	5118.4
14329.9	13944.3	13917
3726.01	3638.91	3673.34
4916.43	4834.12	4737.53

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get...but do we
receive faxes
om tissue?"

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FORMANCE WAS...

Now arrange the pieces
from the picture above as
guided by the words in
this puzzle.

PROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You're often considered self-centred, and you can't see how anyone could think that. In your mind, you're doing everything for others. You'd risk your life for others on a moment's notice. Today, it's more likely all that's required is a kind gesture. Be watching for the opportunity to provide it.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Concentrate on your studies during the day. You're like a sponge, gathering up information and retaining it well. Focus on learning how to do something that will benefit somebody you love. This will likely take place in a domestic setting, and the other person will be absolutely tickled. If you make that your goal, you can't fail.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You should be feeling confident today. You're intelligent and often figure things out more quickly than others. But sometimes you're a little shy and might write down what you know rather than say it out loud. Well, today you won't have that problem. Speak up and let everybody know what you think.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) To the idea of getting rid of stuff at a profit is a prevailing theme today. If you're in business, hang out the red-tag specials. Mark everything down 5 per cent and people will think they're getting the deal of the century. Use the money to benefit those close to you, and everybody wins.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) The moon's finally in your sign. It's about time. You've had enough of doing what other people want. Now you'll make them bend to your will, right? Wrong. The sun's still in Virgo, the sign of service. For you, it also indicates money coming in. You'll get it by providing something other people need. Do that today.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You've been pressured to take care of old business for the last few weeks. You thought you were done, but there are still a couple items left on those lists. One of them is a real thorn in your side. It's going to get worse before it gets better, so you'd better give it the attention it demands.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) The last couple of days have been sort of rough, but now with the moon going into Leo, you'll find an opportunity to play with friends and relieve some of the pressure you've been under. This playing idea may not fit into your regular work schedule, but it's important. So make time for it.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Looks like a confrontation with an authority figure is brewing. You haven't gotten into the battle yet, but you're thinking about it. Why don't you avoid it altogether? Figure out what this person wants and what you're willing to provide. If you work out a deal that's good for everyone, you'll be ready when the moment occurs.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Continue yesterday's projects. Make lists of your assets and figure out how much you're worth by subtracting liabilities. That's going to be useful information. You'll either have a new self-confidence or a bit of nervousness as you realise exactly where you stand financially. One way or the other, promise yourself a treat tonight.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A person with money can be a big help right now. Consult this advisor on how to get what you need for your home. First, figure out what's required, then take your proposal to the people who can provide the funding. These could be relatives, friends or, preferably, an actual lending institution.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) The work is intense today, but you can handle it if you stay calm. Don't take your anxieties out on your sweetheart. You'd just make matters worse. He or she is in a feisty mood anyway. Better to get that other person's energy working for you rather than against you.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This day should be fun, so savour it. Your workload will be increasing soon, so right now how about a little R and R? Do something you and your sweetheart enjoy. If you don't have one, do something you enjoy all by yourself. This is not wasted time. You're getting prepared emotionally and physically for the ordeal ahead.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

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U.S. Open

Rafter wins second straight U.S. Open title

NEW YORK (AP) — The name on the outside says Arthur Ashe Stadium. It really belongs to Patrick Rafter.

and two U.S. Open titles. The second came at the expense Sunday of fellow Australian Mark Philippoussis.

"Now I can look at people and think I have done it again." He did it with almost perfect serve-and-volley

While Rafter was winning the second Grand Slam singles title of his career, it was the first time Philippoussis had reached the final of any of the game's four majors.

"This is just the start for everything," Philippoussis said, "just the start for me."

Lindsay Davenport, also making her first title match appearance, won the women's singles Saturday, beating defending champion Martina Hingis 6-3, 7-5.

"The sight at the end of the tunnel of winning the Grand Slam was what kept me going," said Davenport, the first American-born woman to win the U.S. Open since Chris Evert in 1982.

Rafter, who had to rally from a two-set deficit in the first round, pocketed \$700,000 and moved up to No. 2 in the world rankings — just behind Sampras, whom he defeated Saturday in the semifinals.

Davenport also won \$700,000 — the U.S. Open is the only Grand Slam tournament that pays equal prize money — and moved to No. 2 in the world rankings behind Hingis.

Both Rafter and Davenport dominated the hardcourt circuit this summer, each winning three tournaments before coming to Flushing Meadows.

With Rafter and Philippoussis almost matching point for point through the first two sets, Rafter began his winning run in the fifth game of the third set after blowing a 40-0 lead.

"When Philippoussis pulled to deuce, Rafter slammed his racket to the ground in disgust. On the next point, Philippoussis found an opening down the line, but instead slammed a forehand into

the net. When Philippoussis netted a backhand service return on the next point, Rafter had held.

The missed opportunity might have been on Philippoussis' mind in the next game when he dropped serve for only the second time in the match.

It was a long game — 10 points — as games on this day went — but it included one of the best exchanges of the match.

Out of position, Rafter hit a backhand lob, a shot that had worked for him the entire day. This time, Philippoussis backpedaled and hit a smash.

Rafter, though, was able to get it back, and Philippoussis responded with a forehand cross-court. Again Rafter got there.

With both at the net, they traded forehand volleys before Philippoussis netted the ball.

That gave Rafter the ad, and he closed out the break when Philippoussis failed to get a half-volley over the net.

Philippoussis didn't win another game.

"After the 2-all game, I think I just showed a bit of emotion there. I was a bit frustrated," Rafter said. "I just loosened up, and from there I just gained more and more confidence."

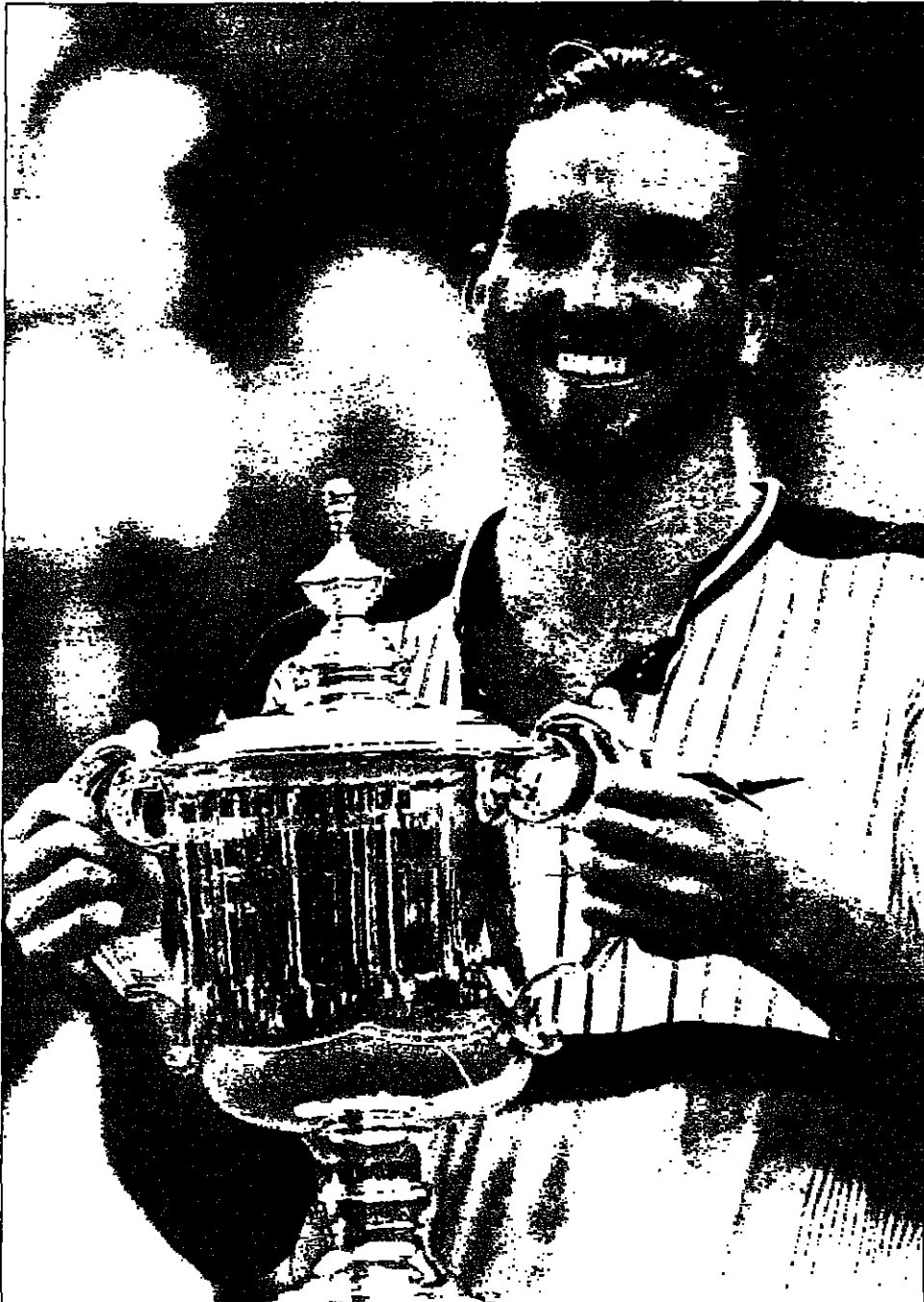
One of the biggest servers in tennis, Philippoussis powered his way to the final. But the power was no match for the speed of Rafter, who has won all three of their career matches. The second set was the first Rafter ever lost in their rivalry.

"You've got to hand it to 'Pat, five unforced errors for the match," Philippoussis said. "At the moment, he's playing like the best player in the world."

Touted as one of America's finest young



Mark Philippoussis of Australia wipes his forehead during his match against number three seeded Patrick Rafter of Australia in the U.S. Open final Sunday in Flushing Meadows, New York. Philippoussis lost 3-6, 6-3, 2-6, 6-0 (AP photo)



Number three seeded Patrick Rafter of Australia holds the trophy after his victory over compatriot Mark Philippoussis at the U.S. Open final Sunday in Flushing Meadows, New York. Rafter won 6-3, 3-6, 6-2, 6-0 (AP photo)

Since the stadium opened a year ago, Rafter hasn't lost at the National Tennis Center, winning 14 consecutive matches

"Now I feel year last wasn't such a fluke," Rafter said after his 6-3, 3-6, 6-2, 6-0 victory in 2 hours, 6 minutes.

tennis, making only five unforced errors and finishing with a flourish, capturing the final 10 games.

players after winning the U.S. Open junior championship in 1992. Davenport had never before reached a Grand Slam tournament singles final, although she did

capture the gold medal at the Atlanta Olympics.

Then came a dream summer that ended with the U.S. Open crown, the title she's always craved. "You'd hear, 'Oh, she'll

never win," Davenport said.

"How can you tell the future? I'll just try my best and one day it will happen." At the Open, it finally did.

Summer's hottest players sizzle at U.S. Open

NEW YORK (R) — It was an open and shut case at the last Grand Slam of the year as the summer's hottest players made their biggest splash of the season at the U.S. Open.

Patrick Rafter and Lindsay Davenport, both near-invincible in the hard-court season, were crowned king and queen of the fortnight at the sprawling ode-to-concrete grounds of the National Tennis Centre.

The tennis was not nearly so tumultuous as events of the day that hit one after another through the championships, starting with the horrific tragedy of the Swissair crash, swinging over to the euphoria surrounding baseball slugger Mark McGwire's home run exploits and on to the lurid details of some of President Bill Clinton's clinches.

Form ruled on the tennis courts, yet produced contrasting plot lines within the men's and women's draws. While Rafter reinforced his champion's status by winning a second Open title in a row, Davenport broke through for her first Grand Slam title in a refreshing testament to hard work and determination.

With the women's game gaining notice for the

attractiveness of young stars such as Anna Kournikova, the awesome athleticism of an emerging Venus Williams and the precision genius of a Martina Hingis, Davenport engineered a personal makeover this year and trumped them all.

The towering Californian shed her ugly duckling image by losing 30 pounds (13.6 kg), becoming fitter, more mobile and hungrier to succeed. The "new" Davenport soared to victory, beating Williams and Hingis in the process.

"I feel like I've done it on my own, kind of almost through the back door in the beginning. I just kind of played," said Davenport, 22, pointing out she was never touted as a prodigy as some of her rivals have been.

"You know, no one ever picked me to do well. I just kind of improved, was able to do it out of the spotlight, was able to kind of grow up on my own pace, do everything that I wanted to do before I really set my eyes on tennis."

The power-hitting Davenport revealed she had considered changing her look, like Williams, who had seven different tight-fit-

ting outfits, one for each possible match she might have at the Open. Davenport denied the 1997 Open runner-up a berth in the final — and the chance to wear her last dress.

"I have one outfit, but a lot of them," admitted Davenport, still an imposing figure at 6-foot-2 1/2 (1.89 m). "I was supposed to wear some new colours here, but my size didn't come in. Nike didn't give me the extra larges. They only gave me large, so I would have had some new outfits here."

Rafter brought his old serve-and-volleying self back to Arthur Ashe Stadium, which opened last year and has known only one champion — the dashing Australian, who has now won 14 straight Open matches.

The 25-year-old Rafter exploded into prominence last year with his Open triumph. This year, promising Mark Philippoussis, 21, was staging his own coming out party as he rode a booming serve to his first Grand Slam final in an all-Australian title match that made many think back to the glory days of Laver, Newcombe, Emerson and Roche.

"It will give tennis a huge shot in the arm in Australia, no question about that," said Australian Davis Cup coach Tony Roche after the final. "We have a great tradition in Australia in tennis. It is just fabulous to see that situation again."

"Instead of having one guy, Rafter, we got the twin towers," said Paul McNamee, who won three Grand Slam doubles crowns with fellow-Australian Peter McNamara.

But what might have been an Aussie love-athon, turned a touch sour as Philippoussis revealed bruised feelings in spotting Roche, an adviser to Rafter, and John Newcombe sitting and celebrating with the Rafter contingent at the final.

"To be quite honest, today when you see those guys, Davis Cup captain, coach, sitting in his box ... I would say I was extremely disappointed. I expected a lot more."

Another disappointed figure at the championships was world number one Pete Sampras, foiled by Rafter in the semifinals in his bid to tie Australian Roy Emerson for tops on the all-time list with 12 Grand Slam men's titles.

Sampras's next shot at tying the mark will come, fittingly, at the Australian Open. Sampras said missing his run at the record was not the end of the world, after all, and that he took pride in winning his fifth Wimbledon this summer.

Perspective was a persistent theme at the Open. The most poignant case being that of Switzerland's Marc Rosset, the 1992 Olympic champion.

Rosset, a first-round Open loser to Slovak Dominik Hrbaty, had booked a ticket to return home on the doomed Swissair Flight 111 that crashed off the coast of Nova Scotia, Canada, killing all 229 people aboard.

The 27-year-old Swiss had a change of heart at the last minute and decided instead to hang around Flushing Meadows an extra day.

"It was a strange feeling when you realise that for just changing your mind, you are still alive," Rosset said.

"I am going to try to enjoy more my life, like every day, and it is going to be a benefit for myself."

Leading ATP Tour prize-money winners

MONACO (R) — Leading prize money winners issued by the ATP Tour on Monday:

1. Patrick Rafter (Australia)	\$2,085,807
2. Marcelo Rios (Chile)	1,681,071
3. Pete Sampras (U.S.)	1,541,537
4. Carlos Moya (Spain)	1,535,423
5. Alex Corretja (Spain)	1,167,839
6. Petr Korda (Czech Republic)	1,027,213
7. Yevgeny Kafelnikov (Russia)	917,422
8. Albert Costa (Spain)	909,826
9. Goran Ivanisevic (Croatia)	882,922
10. Mark Philippoussis (Australia)	865,320
11. Karol Kucera (Slovakia)	857,277
12. Andre Agassi (U.S.)	840,018
13. Jonas Bjorkman (Sweden)	822,344
14. Richard Krajicek (Netherlands)	818,144
15. Tim Henman (Britain)	720,870
16. Paul Haarhuis (Netherlands)	661,377
17. Gustavo Kuerten (Brazil)	646,904
18. Cedric Pioline (France)	633,638
19. Greg Rusedski (Britain)	631,237
20. Alberto Berasategui (Spain)	602,180

U.S. Open at a glance

NEW YORK (AP) —

Highlights of Sunday's play in the \$14 million U.S. Open tennis championships:

Weather: Sunny and warm, with a high of 80. Attendance: 21,447. Total for the tournament — \$35,155, down from last year by 24,349. Results: Patrick Rafter won his second consecutive men's singles title with a 6-3, 3-6, 6-2, 6-0 victory over Mark Philippoussis. It was the first all-Australian men's final at the U.S. championships since 1970, when Ken

Roswall beat Tony Roche, now Rafter's coach. Martina Hingis completed a personal Grand Slam, winning the women's doubles with Jana Novotna over Lindsay Davenport and Natasha Zvereva 6-3, 6-3. David Nalbandian won the boys singles, 6-3, 7-5, over Roger Federer, while Jelena Dokic took the girls singles with a 6-4, 6-2 victory over Katarina Srebotnik. The men's legends doubles title went to Vijay Amritraj and Jose Higuera, 6-4, 6-4, over Tom Gullikson and

Dick Stockton, and the women's legends doubles were won by Betsy Nagelsen and Wendy Turnbull, 7-6 (7-5), 6-3, over Gigi Fernandez and Betty Stove. State of the Day: Rafter was credited with just five unforced errors, compared with 29 for Philippoussis.

Quote of the Day: "Having the experience of last year really helped me. I was just cruising." — Patrick Rafter, winning his second Grand Slam singles crown and moving to No 2 in the world.

TODAY AT	PHILADELPHIA 1'	PHILADELPHIA 2'	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	Islam Yanes Theatre
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	Sophie Marceau in Leo Tolstoy's ANNA KARENINA Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	NASSER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Comedian Adel Imam .. in AL ZAEEM Shows: 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30 GODZILLA Shows: 12:30, 3:30	CONCORD 1' NASSER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD 2' UP CLOSE & PERSONAL Shows: 3:30, 8:30 only	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria ARMAGEDDON Shows: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:45	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria GREAT EXPECTATIONS Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45	WATCH OUT FOR THE NEW PLAY Terrorism

title

Sosa passes Maris, ties McGwire with his 62nd

CHICAGO (AP) — Sammy Sosa wasn't the first to pass Babe Ruth and Roger Maris. So what? Now he has caught Mark McGwire and rekindled this remarkable race for one of the most glamorous and prestigious records in all of sports.

Sosa hit his 61st and 62nd homers Sunday, sending tears streaming down his cheeks and Wrigley Field into euphoria.

Then the man who once sold fruit, shined shoes and washed cars in his native Dominican Republic promised that "this is not over yet."

"I'll let you know when the year is over," Sosa said when asked how many he thought he could hit.

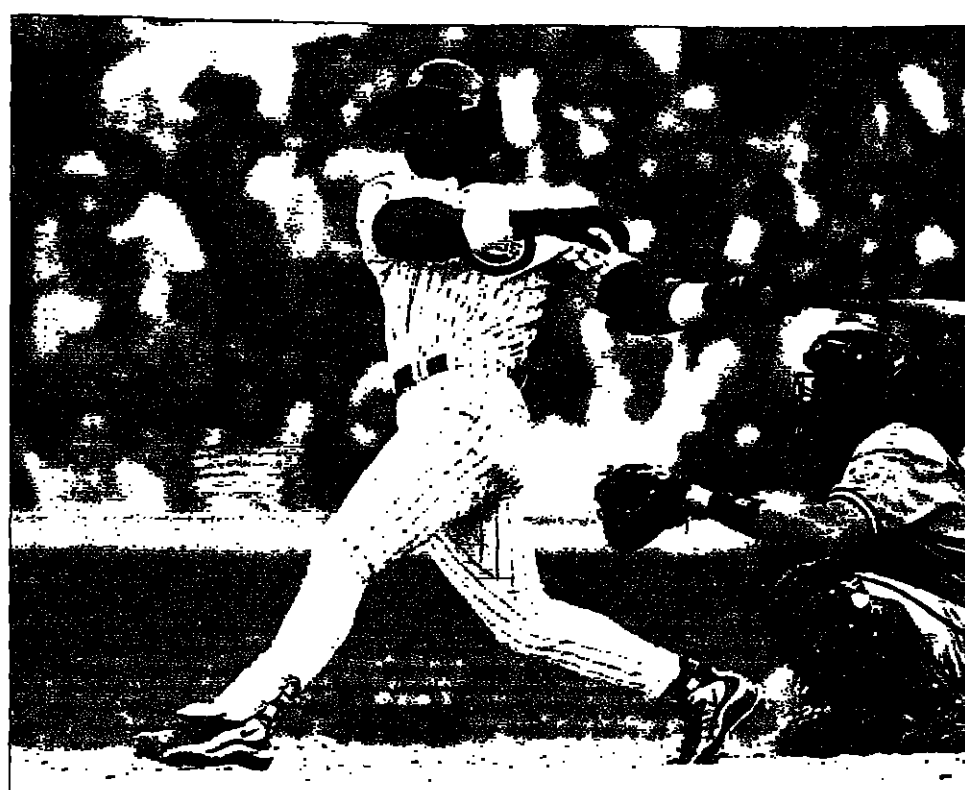
And after four homers in three days against the Milwaukee Brewers, his favourite pitching staff for long balls, Sosa might indeed be ready to jump ahead of McGwire.

Hours after Sosa's stunning performance, McGwire was removed from a game at Houston because of back spasms. McGwire is 1-for-14 since breaking Maris' record with No. 62 last Tuesday night against the Cubs in St. Louis.

"It's awesome, outstanding," McGwire said of Sosa. "I've been doing this for the last few years with Ken Griffey. We go back and forth."

"We've got until the 27th of September. I don't think you have to be a rocket scientist to figure out it's not over. I never once thought that was it."

When the Cubs beat the Brewers 11-10 on Sunday on Mark Grace's two-out



Chicago Cubs Sammy Sosa comes around on his swing and watches his 62nd home run of the season leave Wrigley Field in the ninth inning of their game against the Milwaukee Brewers on Sunday. Sosa's 62nd, hit off pitcher Eric Plunk, ties the new major league record set by St. Louis Cardinals Mark McGwire (Returns photo)

homer in the 10th, Sosa stood in the on-deck circle, denied another at-bat and shot at No. 63.

"I thought pretty much the home run race was going to be McGwire's. But when my buddy gets hot, he can hit them in a hurry. And he proved that," Grace said after jokingly apologising for robbing Sosa of another at-bat.

"I just hope Sammy gets the attention he deserves. Not only has he hit 62 homers, but he has carried us. He is without a doubt the MVP of the National League."

Sosa, who trailed

McGwire 24-9 in late May, homered off Bronswell Patrick in the fifth inning, sending an 0-1 pitch 480 feet into the street behind the left-field fence. He hit another 480-foot homer in the ninth, a solo shot off Eric Plunk.

That one dropped Babe Ruth into fourth place on the single-season list with 60, which he hit in 1927. Maris passed that mark with 61 in 1961. Now, amazingly, a record that had stood for 37 years has been passed twice in less than a week.

"It's unbelievable. It was something that even I can't

believe I was doing," Sosa said after his ninth and 10th homers off Milwaukee pitching. "It can happen to two people, Mark and I."

With tears and sweat running down his face as he sat in the dugout after his second triumphant tour around the bases, Sosa came out for three curtain calls. Fans littered the field with paper cups and other debris while chanting "Sam-mee! Sam-mee!" causing a delay that lasted six minutes.

"I don't usually cry, but I cry inside. I was blowing kisses to my mother, I was crying a little bit," Sosa said.

Commonwealth Games

O'Neill gets record eighth gold, Aussies wins four out of five swim events

KUALA LUMPUR (AP) — Four-gold Susie O'Neill collected a women's record eighth Commonwealth Games title and Michael Klim made it a world record, two golds a silver and a bronze from four swims as Australia maintained its stranglehold in the pool Monday.

O'Neill, who won a gold at Auckland in 1990 and three more in Victoria, British Columbia in '94, took her total here to four with a double success in the pool.

After winning the 400-metre freestyle, O'Neill swam the final leg of the 4x100 freestyle relay for gold No. 8. That's the most for a woman swimmer and one fewer than Mike Wenden's total of nine.

Klim, who shared in Australia's 4x200 metre freestyle world record triumph on Sunday, set a Games record in the 100 free with a time of 49.43 to edge countryman Chris Fyler and England's Gavin

Meadows.

"I don't think about records a hell of a lot," O'Neill said. "But I know that when I retire it will be nice. I suppose I'd like people to remember my name so this is a good way of doing it."

Australia also gained swimming golds through Giaan Rooney in the women's 100-metre backstroke but its streak of golds was stopped at 10 by Canada's Mark Versfeld, who triumphed in the men's 200 backstroke.

While the 5,000 Commonwealth Games athletes chased more medals Monday, there was a health scare in the village when a women Australian team official and a New Zealand team doctor contracted the potentially fatal dengue fever.

"She's in hospital and it looks very much like she's got it," said Australian team doctor Brian Sando said the woman, who declined to identify the woman.

According to New Zealand

team chief Les Mills, Dr. Nick Chamberlain probably caught the disease when he was bitten by a mosquito during a run.

"They took him in for a test, took a blood sample and he was diagnosed," Mills said. "It's not serious there are no complications, we expect him back in a couple of days."

In action outside the pool, Andrei Kravtsov, a 27-year-old Russian who moved to Australia almost six years ago, overcame a shoulder injury and a persistent challenge by England's Andrew Atherton to win the men's all-round gymnastics title.

Australia's Brennan Downrick took the bronze but the battle was mainly between Kravtsov and Atherton with the Australian triumphing by .65.

Host Malaysia collected its second gold of the Games by winning the men's team badminton title while England won the women's gold.

South Africa picked up its first

medal and first title of the 16th Games when Gavin van Rhyen and Michael Thiele won the men's pairs free rifle prone at the shooting ranges on picturesque

Langkawi Island off Malaysia's east coast.

The silver went to England's Phil Scanlan and Neil Day and Tim Lowndes and Warren Potent of Australia won the bronze.

Sharon Bowes and Christina Ashcroft earned Canada its third gold medal of the games by winning the women's air rifle.

Noemi Rostas and Belinda Muehlberg of Australia claimed the silver and England's Rebecca Spicer and Louise Minnet collected bronze.

Canada's streak of Games triumphs in synchronised swimming continued with Valerie Hould-Marchand's success in the solo event ahead of Australia's Naomi Young and England's Gayle Adamson.

Tottenham Hotspur owner rejects takeover bid

LONDON (AP) — Tottenham Hotspur chairman Alan Sugar has rejected a takeover bid by British investment company ENIC, the London Stock Exchange said Monday.

Spurs were one of several Premier League clubs linked with a takeover in the wake of last week's 623 million pound (\$1 billion) bid by BSkyB for Manchester United.

Arsenal, defending League and F.A. Cup double titlist, has also

confirmed it is negotiating with communications company Carlton.

Sugar said Monday he had received the ENIC bid last Thursday and had rejected it.

Enic, which already owns major stakes in Glasgow Rangers, A.E.K. Athens, Slavia Prague and Vincenzo in Italy, has indicated it wants to buy into the Premier League.

Last month, Sugar said he would consider offers for his

40.88 per cent stake in Tottenham after hundreds of fans demonstrated outside the home ground at White Hart Lane calling for head coach Christian Gross and himself to resign.

Gross was fired a week later after steering Spurs to its first win of the season over Everton. Spurs scored a 2-1 win over Blackburn following Gross' axing but slumped to a 3-0 loss to Middlesbrough Sunday and are in 12th place in 20-team league.

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Bierhoff voted German Footballer of the Year

BONN (R) — AC Milan striker Oliver Bierhoff was voted German Footballer of the Year by a panel of sports journalists.

Bierhoff, 30, beat veteran Bayern Munich libero Lothar Matthaus and Kaiserslautern striker Olaf Marschall into second and third places in the vote organised by soccer magazine Kicker.

Bierhoff was the best scorer in the Italian Serie A last season with 27 goals for Udinese. He then moved to AC Milan and scored twice in a 3-0 win over Bologna in the club's opening league match last Saturday.

The tall, blond striker went down in history two years ago, scoring the "golden goal" which gave Germany victory over the Czech Republic in the European championship final at Wembley.

Since making his international debut in February 1996 against Portugal, Bierhoff has appeared 33 times for Germany, scoring 20 goals.

"When I think of what has happened to me during the past two years, I sometimes wonder if it's really true or if it's all a dream," Bierhoff told Kicker in an interview released on Monday.

"It is a great honour to receive this award, especially when you take a look at all the great names on the list," he added.

Bierhoff won 501 votes compared with 196 for Matthaus and 107 for Marschall. Borussia Dortmund defender Juergen Kohler, who claimed the award last year, came fifth. Shortly before stepping down as national coach last week, Bert Vogts had appointed Bierhoff as the new Germany captain.

World Cup stars Zidane, Deschamps questioned in doping probe

TURIN (AP) — French World Cup stars Zinedine Zidane and Didier Deschamps, who both play for Italian club Juventus of Turin, were questioned Monday by a prosecutor looking into possible use of banned substances in Serie A.

Neither player would be specific about what they told Turin prosecutor Raffaele Guariniello. Both did say creatine, a legal muscle-builder, was discussed.

Deschamps had also been called in by Guariniello last month.

Guariniello has questioned several current and former Juventus players and coach Marcello Lippi and has obtained the club's medical records during his month-long investigation.

His is one of three separate inquiries into the use of banned substances in Italian soccer.

One for the Italian Olympic Committee's antidoping commission ended in August without finding evidence of illegal drug use, but did find that the use of legal mus-



French Juventus player Zinedine Zidane answers journalist questions as he leaves the office of prosecutor Raffaele Guariniello in Turin Monday (Returns photo)

cle-builders is widespread.

The investigations were triggered when AS Roma coach Zdenek Zeman expressed his "amazement" at the quick muscular development of

some players. Zeman specifically mentioned current Juventus striker Alessandro Del Piero and former Juve star Gianluca Vialli, now player-coach for English club Chelsea.

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Iraqi deputies recommend end of cooperation with UNSCOM

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq's parliament on Monday recommended that it end all cooperation with U.N. arms inspectors unless the U.N. Security Council renews its recently cancelled 60-day review.

The 250 Iraqi deputies voted unanimously on a recommendation that the U.N. Security Council should cancel last Wednesday's resolution which suspended regular reviews of Iraqi sanctions.

But the parliament stopped short of calling for an immediate end to cooperation with the United Nations.

The Iraqi parliament also urged the Security Council

to begin dialogue with Iraq to review what has been achieved in the process of eliminating Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. The elimination of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction is the condition to lifting U.N. economic sanctions imposed on Baghdad after the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

"The National Assembly [parliament] at the end of its session has authorised the Iraqi leadership to take the necessary measures which would guarantee the lifting of the embargo on Iraq," an official statement at the end of the extraordinary session of parliament said.

The statement condemned the U.N. resolution 1194

and held the United States and Britain responsible for issuing it.

"The assembly calls for cancelling its resolution in order to start discussions and in the event the council does not respond positively, the assembly calls on the Iraqi leadership to implement its previous recommendations [which calls for ending activities of U.N. arms inspectors in Iraq]," said the statement.

The U.N. Security Council on Wednesday voted unanimously to suspend its regular reviews of Iraqi sanctions as punishment for Iraq's August 5 decision to end cooperation with U.N. arms inspectors.

Sudan's parliament backs normalisation of ties with Egypt

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Sudan's parliament has backed calls by President Omar Al Bashir for a normalisation of ties with Egypt and a series of measures for "defusing the tension" between the two countries, a newspaper said Monday.

Secretary of Foreign Relations Abdullah Suliman Al Awad said the national congress will "back up all efforts aimed at restoring Sudanese-Egyptian relations to normality," Al Rai Al Aam reported.

Bashir and Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman Ismail, who leaves for Cairo on Tuesday, have hammered out a series of measures for "defusing the tension" between Khartoum and Cairo, the Al Rai Al Akher

daily said Sunday. Relations between the two countries turned sour after the military takeover by General Bashir. Both sides accused each other of harbouring opposition groups undermining their regimes.

Egypt also accused Sudan of being behind an assassination attempt on President Hosni Mubarak during an African summit in Ethiopia three years ago. Sudan denied the accusations.

But relations have thawed considerably since Egypt criticised a U.S. missile attack on a Khartoum pharmaceutical plant on August 20, which Sudan believes was instrumental in prompting the Arab League's condemnation of the attack.

Egypt has also sent aid to

Sudan in response to torrential rains that have flooded many parts of the African state. On Saturday, Egypt flew in a plane-load of jute and tents to the flood-stricken country.

On Monday, Egyptian Health Minister Ismail Sallam will lead a 20-member medical team to Sudan. Sallam's plane will carry food, medicine and other supplies as part of Egypt's humanitarian assistance to neighbouring Sudan.

The humanitarian aid follows \$300,000 worth of assistance Cairo sent in August to Sudan, which is also suffering from a severe famine and civil war.

Sudan government bombs hospital in south — agency

NAIROBI (R) — Sudanese government warplanes have bombed a hospital compound in the rebel-held town of Yei in the south of the country, the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) agency said Monday.

One person was killed and 22 others were injured in Sunday's attack, Nairobi-based NPA spokesman Chast Paul told Reuters after speaking by short-wave radio to NPA workers in Yei.

"Between 1200 and 1300 hours an Antonov plane of the government of Sudan airforce dropped 12 bombs in three phases around the NPA hospital and the compound which houses the doctor's mess," Paul said.

Fourteen of the injured — one in critical condition — were admitted to the hospital which sustained damage to its stores and administration centre in the attack, he said.

"We feel our hospital was specifically a target," Paul said. The NPA hospital is the only hospital in Yei, the main town in western Equatoria, around 60 kilometres from the Ugandan border.

Yei has been bombed several times this year, most heavily on March 5 when 12 people were killed, including a nurse, as the hospital suffered a direct hit.

On Thursday, two people died in a government bomb attack on a camp of internally

displaced people at Labone in eastern Equatoria, also close to the Ugandan border, NPA said. Equatoria province falls outside the scope of a three-month ceasefire agreed by the government and southern rebels to ease the flow of relief food to hunger-stricken areas of the south.

The Sudan People's Liberation Army started its war against the Khartoum government in 1983 and since then around 1.3 million people have been killed through fighting and famine.

NPA operates only in rebel-held areas of south Sudan, and also works to advocate rebels' political cause.

Iraq urges Czechs not to allow U.S. broadcast

BAGHDAD (AP) — A government newspaper urged the Czech government on Monday to turn down a request by Washington to allow a U.S.-funded radio station to broadcast to Iraq from its territory.

The daily Al Jumhuriya, in a front-page editorial, said Iraq was ready to expand ties with the Czech Republic "in

all areas" if it did not let the Radio Free Europe broadcasts to Iraq go ahead.

"The Czech government should not be deceived and give in to American pressure," the paper said.

The Iraqi government objected when the issue arose last month over broadcasts to Iraq along with proposed programming directed at Iran.

Another government daily warned allowing the broadcasts to Iraq would harm Iraqi-Czech relations.

Despite the previous Czech government's favourable stance, Prague's new Social Democratic government hesitated about Iraq, apparently fearing the station might become a target for terrorist attacks.



UNCOMFORTABLE AT THE SLOTS: Palestinians Shadi left and Ahmad, both 20-years-old from Jericho, sit at a row of slot machines during a press tour of the new \$50-million Oasis Casino on Monday scheduled to open for business today. The Palestinians are employed by the casino as cleaners. The casino, which will eventually be a project valued at \$150-million and will include a luxury hotel and a golf course, is operated by Casinos Austria, the world's largest casino chain (See separate story) (Reuters photo)

U.S. keen to use Khatami visit for thaw

LONDON (R) — The United States would like to use Iranian President Mohammad Khatami's visit to New York for the United Nations General Assembly next week to accelerate a thaw in long-hostile relations with Tehran, diplomats say.

But President Bill Clinton's domestic troubles and Iran's threats of revenge against Afghanistan's Taliban militia over the killing of Iranian diplomats make any spectacular rapprochement unlikely.

Former Secretary of State James Baker added his voice at the weekend to a chorus of influential American strategists calling for better relations, telling a conference in Bahrain that Washington should consider easing its sanctions on Iran.

But U.S. officials are perplexed about how to promote a dialogue with the Islamic republic, given fierce opposition from Khatami's hardline clerical opponents to any direct talks with what they call "the global arrogance."

Khatami, a moderate cleric, is due in the United States for the first time next Monday, the same day as Clinton, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and a host of world leaders and foreign ministers.

Apart from his General Assembly speech, he has been invited to address the

Asia Society of New York, the forum Secretary of State Madeleine Albright used in June to propose building a "very different relationship" with Iran.

An official at the Asia Society said it was not yet known whether Khatami would in fact speak to the organisation, where he might meet some powerful American opinion leaders.

Clinton called in June for a "genuine reconciliation" with Iran and said that country was changing for the better, a sharp change in tone from Washington's frequent characterisation of the Islamic Republic as a "rogue state."

Tehran responded by calling for deeds rather than words, urging the United States to release Iranian assets frozen since the 1979 seizure of hostages at the U.S. embassy in Tehran during the Islamic revolution, and to drop economic sanctions.

It also wants Washington to stop trying to exclude Iran from the export routes for Caspian Sea oil and gas. Clinton waived U.S. penalties on a \$2 billion Iranian gas deal with French, Russian and Malaysian companies in May.

But abolishing the sanctions that punish firms which invest in Iran would require legislation unthinkable before mid-term congressional elections, in November, officials say.

However, the U.S. oil industry is pressing the administration not to shut it out of doing lucrative business with Iran.

One early test could be a decision on a request from Mobil Corp to swap oil produced in Turkmenistan with Iran — a simple way to export Caspian basin oil to world markets. As a transit arrangement, the deal might not strictly breach the U.S. embargo on trade with Tehran.

American officials are impressed with Khatami's moderation, commitment to more cooperative foreign relations and attempt to promote civil society, freedom of speech and the rule of law.

They also see a potential joint interest in containing Iraq, stabilising Central Asia and fighting the drugs trade.

But Washington remains wary of Iran's suspected links with anti-American "terrorism," its missile and nuclear programmes and its virulent hostility to Israel. They are also aware that Khatami does not fully control the armed forces, intelligence services and internal security, which answer to supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, an anti-American hardliner.

Clinton administration officials who favour improved ties with Iran were relieved that Israel's supporters in Congress did not totally reject his calls

for rapprochement, even after Iran tested a medium-range ballistic missile in July.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, influential on Capitol Hill, has repeatedly described Iran as the greatest threat to peace in the Middle East.

Clinton's own reaction to the Shehab-3 missile firing was moderate, although Washington has made preventing the transfer of nuclear and missile technology to Iran a major focus of its relations with Russia, China and North Korea.

An improved U.S.-Iranian relationship could change the regional security picture, enabling Washington to scale down its unpopular and costly deployment in the Gulf, a prospect attractive to some in the U.S. military, sources say.

Some naval forces would remain to contain Iraq and reassure Arab oil monarchies, strategic analysts say. The "dual containment" policy which has been the keystone of the Clinton administration's approach to Iran and Iraq has been quietly dropped this year but no coherent replacement strategy has been enunciated.

"Like an old soldier, dual containment didn't die, it just faded away," Gary Sick, an expert on Gulf policy at Columbia University, observed this month.

Israel offers reward for lost submarine clue

ISTANBUL (R) — Israel issued an advertisement in a Turkish newspaper Monday, offering rewards for information on an Israeli submarine which disappeared 30 years ago with 69 crew on board.

The advertisement in Sabah newspaper, placed by the Israeli defence ministry and navy, said rewards of between \$5,000 and \$300,000 would be given to anyone providing information on, or remnants from, the Dakar which was lost in Greek waters

in January 1968.

The submarine, which last made contact with shore command on January 24, 1968, was on its maiden voyage under the Israeli flag from Portsmouth, England, to the Israeli port of Haifa. Its emergency buoy washed up on a beach in Gaza in February 1969.

In a bid to recover the sailors' bodies, Israel previously conducted search operations along the seabed near the Greek island of Rhodes, near

the Turkish mainland. Earlier searches off Egypt and other areas of the eastern Mediterranean proved fruitless.

The advert said the reward programme would last until December 14 and included phone and fax numbers for those with information.

Mainly Muslim but officially secular Turkey has formed close military ties with Israel since 1996 when the two countries signed a defence pact which angered Arab states and Iran.



Fergie to wed Italian count

LONDON (AFP) — Britain's Duchess of York — "Fergie" — is to wed an Italian count with whom she has been romantically linked since last year, her estranged wife told The Daily Mail newspaper Monday. Count Gaddo della Gherardesca's estranged wife, Michela Valli, said that her 49-year-old husband had told her that he and Fergie were engaged to be married and she had decided to give the match her blessing. "Sarah is great company and I am extremely pleased that she has become my husband's fiancée," Signora Valli, 46, said, adding that Fergie and her husband saw each other regularly, at his home in Tuscany and in Britain.

Bride wears white, and so do the wedding guests

LONDON (R) — The bride wore white, and so did the wedding guests when "Scary Spice" Melanie Brown went to the altar with her fiancé, dancer Jimmy Gulzar, television reports said. Hundreds of fans of the pop group The Spice Girls turned out in the English village of Little Marlow, but failed to get a glimpse of Mel B thanks to a massive security operation and a canvas-covered walkway between the St. John the Baptist church and a nearby reception area. Sky television reported.

Madonna angers Hindus this time

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Madonna has offended Catholics and fundamentalist Christians with her provocative use of Christian symbols in her music videos. Now, the Material Girl has angered Hindus. Wearing a sari through blouse and a Hindu facial marking, Madonna performed her song "Ray of Light" at the MTV Music Video Awards last week. "Madonna's MTV stage performance, which combined Eastern mysticism with Western hedonism, did not sit well with sincere Hindus. Vaishnavas and yoga practitioners around the globe," the World Vaishnava Association said in a statement.

Your self-worth is metered by your weight

NEW YORK (AP) — Before she was a big star, Jennifer Aniston was a little too big. To lose weight she had to give up her favourite food: mayonnaise on white bread sandwiches. "I didn't even know I was overweight until someone told me," the "Friends" co-star says in the October Redbook magazine. "I hate it that your self-worth is metered by how much you weigh." Giving up her most cherished foods, getting on a diet plan and exercise helped Aniston drop 30 pounds a few years ago. Now the 1.65 metres tall actress is down to 51 kilos, a weight she maintains without cutting out all fun foods.

I wanted to be the first to introduce them to Singapore

SINGAPORE — A Singapore firm is marketing U.S.-made rust proof steel chastity belts at a price of \$788 each, a newspaper reported. Singapore's Sunday Times quoted Credit Marketing owner Eudora Ong as saying she was targeting husbands who suspected their wives of being unfaithful. Parents with teenage daughters and women who feared being raped, "I wanted to be the first to introduce them to Singapore. Perhaps there are people who have been hunting for them and don't know how or where to get them," the newspaper quoted her as saying.

By Paul Holmes
Reuters

JERICHO — The lure of Las Vegas comes to the Holy Land this week with the opening of the first casino on Palestinian-ruled soil.

The \$50 million Oasis Casino, close to the biblical Mount of Temptation, opens to the public on Wednesday in what amounts to a bold gamble by Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

It will be off limits to Palestinian citizens and the obvious attraction is to punters in Israel, where gambling is banned. Advertisements in Israeli newspapers advised readers on Monday they were "two days away from the dream" of a flutter.

Arafat has approved the money-spinning project over the objections of Muslim leaders in Jericho, a sleepy town of 20,000 at the lowest point on earth, and the militant group Hamas.

Citing Islam's prohibition of

gambling, they say they fear the facility will corrupt morals and expose the world's oldest city to the world's oldest profession — prostitution.

The European operators portrayed the casino on Monday as a golden opportunity for Palestinians to find work and said they had plenty of experience of "careful and responsible" gaming.

They also said they were confident gamblers risked losing only their money and would not be put off visiting the casino by bursts of Israeli-Palestinian unrest.

"It is almost a dream come true to see a major tourist attraction on the banks of the River Jordan that will give jobs to hundreds of Palestinians," said Norbert Steger, president of the Liechtenstein-based holding company CAP Tourism Inc.

Steger, a former Austrian vice-chancellor, declined to identify the owners beyond saying they included Casinos Austria, other European investors and unspeci-

fied Palestinians.

The casino, ringed by a robust steel fence on the dusty plain between Jericho and the Dead Sea, will be operated by Casinos Austria, the world's largest casino chain.

The first phase of a planned \$150 million tourism complex billed as the largest in the Middle East, the casino is aimed at Israelis, tourists and non-Palestinian Arabs from Jordan, and farther afield.

"We believe the business potential here is enormous," said Paul Herzfeld, head of Casinos Austria International.

Arafat, his economic adviser Mohammad Rachid and the Palestinian Justice Ministry were all involved in discussions on approving and licensing the casino.

"It is a tragedy in the history of Palestine and a black spot in the history of the Palestinian people," Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, the spiritual leader of Hamas, said in Gaza.

"The Palestinian (National) Authority (PNA) should reconsider its stand before it is too late to regret it," he told Reuters. Hamas's armed wing has killed scores of Israelis in suicide bombings since Arafat struck his peace deals with Israel.

The project's general director, Alexander Tucek, said the casino had not received "any threats whatsoever."

"We have our own team of international security people," he said. "With the help of the Palestinian police and...the Israeli police I am positive this is a secure place."

Steger said the casino and planned hotels, sports and conference facilities would eventually create 5,000 jobs in the area, directly and indirectly, and spur other foreign investors to put their money in the self-rule PNA.

For Palestinians, struggling in a depressed economy beset by Israeli restrictions, the casino's arrival has brought a clash between traditional values and

the draw of a steady income.

One 29-year-old Palestinian said he had given up his \$400 a month job as a schoolteacher to earn \$850 a month as a slot machine attendant despite his father's disapproval.

"I'm not ashamed to work here but some people are real hypocrites. They say it's prohibited [by Islam] but at the same time they break the laws themselves," the attendant, who asked not to be identified, said.

The casino is located on the edge of Jericho opposite the squalid Aqabat Jaber refugee camp and can be reached along an Israeli-controlled highway in 30 minutes from Jerusalem.

One popular destination for gambling hungry Israelis — Turkey — closed down casinos in February.

Work on the Oasis Casino, which has \$35-only gaming tables and 220 slot machines under neon signs that offer "Desert Treasure," began 14 months ago in a cloak of secrecy.

Foreign staff are being housed not in Jericho but in Jerusalem and the West Bank Jewish settlement of Ma'ale Adumim.

"Palestinians are very nice, actually," said Jana Horka, a 20-year-old croupier from the Czech Republic. "I thought it would be very dangerous but it's okay. I'm not scared any more."

Palestinians will also staff the gaming tables but none of the local croupiers was to be seen during Monday's media tour of a glitzy gaming area that mixes Western decor with what Tucek called the "exquisite traits of the regional culture."

Tucek said the PNA had granted "very favourable" gaming tax terms until the shareholders had recouped their investment. Tax rates would then rise to about 25 per cent, similar to those in Las Vegas and elsewhere, Tucek said.

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